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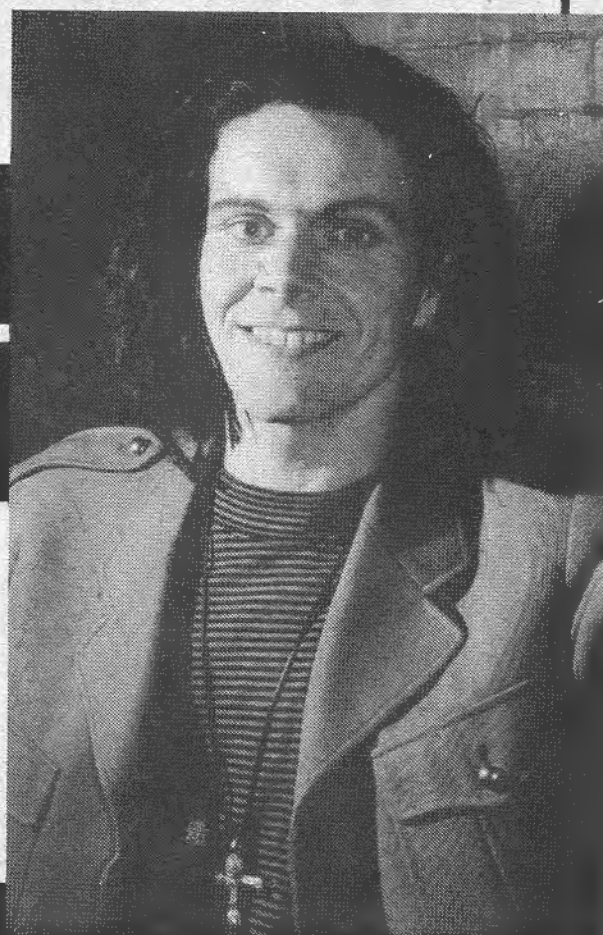




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# B-SIDE NOTES

KEEP SENDING THOSE DECLARATIONS OF LIFE,  
LOVE AND HATE TO: NICK CONIGLIO c/o B-SIDE  
MAGAZINE, P.O. BOX 1860 BURLINGTON, NJ 08016

B-Side:

Enough with the Replacements concert reviews, let's have a cover story!

Kate C.  
Minasha, WI

No. Never. Why should we?

Dear Nick,

When I started out all I was doing was sending you my views on music, Al, and life in the land of Rape and Honey. Now due to the vicious and totally uncalled for slandering of my name by Mr. Small Asian Male, who obviously does not believe in varied opinions, I feel the desperate need to get vile.

You can call me a poser, Mr. S.A. Male, but before you do I suggest you re-read my letter. I do not recall saying that NIN (who isn't on Wax Trax) Ministry, Puppy and Revco were "the only existing industrial musicians," I simply said they were the ones I found interesting (and potentially dangerous.) People like yourself really vex me because you seem to believe that you're omniscient. Well, it's time for you to wake up now. You are nothing but a fool who seems to believe that you are so undeniably cool that you feel the need to call people you don't know posers. I'm curious to know your age, Mr. Small Asian Male, because your attitude suggests that your Pampers need changing.

As for Amy, you're right. I forgot to mention Chris Connelly. He is wonderful, and for neglecting to mention him I apologize unreservedly. Thank you for pointing this out to me like a civil human being.

Nick, don't feel sorry for me. I have dealt with insults from more intelligent life forms than Mr. S.A. Male in my lifetime and I haven't gone on an inter-state killing spree yet, I don't think he'll push me over the edge.

By the way, the Sisters of Mercy should be on every other cover since Andrew Eldritch approaches true godly perfection. (And anyone who gets pissed at me for not mentioning other past & present members of the Sisters can step off, Andrew has always been the driving force.)

The now infamous  
J. Elizabeth

Land of Rape and Honey

P.S. To Sandra in reference of her review of the Sisters NYC show: how short is he? Inquiring minds want to know!

Oh no, no, now they're after each other again! It sure keeps me out of it. Don't apologize to anyone, though, to each his own. And I just to let you know, our Ms. Editor is only about 5'0 maybe 5'2 in her concert death boots, and she claims Andrew's ear was about at lip level, but then again that was after that wine. Hah!

Dear Sirs:

Today I picked up the June/July issue of your magazine. I must admit that if I were one of today's American quasi-pubescent music connoisseurs, I would froth at the mouth in waiting for the next issue (the current popularity and accessibility of "alternative" and "industrial" music disgusts me.) Being a former British youth who is quite old enough to remember the first time we heard from Kraftwerk, the Smiths, The Damned, etc (I remember a time before the Sisters of Mercy and Front 242) I look forward to going out and buying the next issue- though I'll tell the salesclerk I'm buying it for my little brother (just like when I started forking over 1.50 for Doctor Who magazines).

Symphony Woodman  
(don't laugh, my parents are musicians)  
of (unfortunately)  
Phoenix, AZ

P.S. I want to say hello to my very best friend Ms. Harlequinne Smith (also of Phx) and I want to say thank you for the article on Killing Joke and I want to say that Andrew Eldritch is God.)

Let's face it, Symphony, I'd change that name fast. Hell, I can remember a time before there was a Led Zeppelin, now ain't I special! I wish I could have all this fun when I was growing up! These youngsters are spoiled by the choices! And how can you be embarrassed to buy the dear old Side?

Dear B-Side:

Thank you sooo much for making Jesus Jones your cover story. The more bad publicity people give these boys who wipe their butts with money the better. I would also like to discuss the "humanity" that Edwards says lacks in a group such as 242. Anyone who deals with today's mess with that pansy assed song 'Right Here Right Now' must be a college radio gigolo, and please, Eddy, don't use the "I" word when describing a genre that has thousands of times more diversity and balls than you and the ecstasy mother fuckers.

Enough on Jesus Jones who have already been fed depressing amounts of undeserved attention (but I guess you at B-Side have to make a living). I was wondering if you have heard anything on Ministry's up and coming *The Tapes of Wrath* and Thrill Kill Kult's *Sexplosions*.

Michael Bobendrier  
Hoffman Estates, IL

P.S. I bet J. Elizabeth doesn't know what Alien Dog Star, Hypo Luxa, Buck Satan and the ultimate poser all have in common.

They all shop at Sears. I know that! Perfect description of that "pansy-assed

song," but don't say anything against Mikey around here, if you want to live. All we know about that Ministry mess is that it's recorded but supposedly someone needs to get his ass off the Skate Nigs tour and back into the studio to mix it. Like do it now, you fuckin' bum! Do you really honestly like TKK? I just dunno...

On the other hand...

Dear Nick:

What an absolutely exhilarating and delightful interview with the wickedly lovely Mike Edwards of Jesus Jones. I thoroughly enjoyed every word uttered from Mike's heavenly lips- what an absolute gorgeous charmer! Doesn't the man put the world into perspective? He's marvelously brilliant, outspoken (gorgeously so), deliriously charming and wonderfully positive and uplifting! What a change- he doesn't suffer from the conformity and dullness that everyone- or at least a lot- seem to possess. I predict he'll be able to change the face of rock 'n roll - the whole structure of music as we know it! Mike's got enough pomp and pride to do it. I await with eager anticipation. Jesus Jones is the future of music!

By the way, I was so stoked to see Mike's cute face plastered on the cover of your wonderful magazine. I'm glad to see Jesus Jones getting some well-deserved recognition at last- at last! I'm glad that B-Side has done it. Thanks very muchly.

Yours,  
Barbara Jones  
San Diego, CA

P.S. Sandra- wasn't it absolutely hilarious interviewing Mike? Some people have all the luck (sigh) (it's a bum he's married) (YUCK!) Mike Edwards is God. Jesus Jones is God. And B-Side is the bible of music- what more could be asked for? (hey- more Jesus Jones! Please?)

P.S.2 Nick: do you now if Jesus Jones will be coming anywhere near San Diego? You know, tour wise? I need to know- because last time they came here they played at a club and I'm not 18 yet. Believe me, it was torture not being able to go!

Barbara, please, get a grip! Get a cold compress! You use more adjectives than anyone I've ever seen! Christ! Calm down, woman! She was found drowned in a sea of drool, read the tragic headline. Last I heard the tour was planned for August but I know nothing beyond that. And believe me, that smart dude will make sure he plays all ages venues. Oh yeah. And if I see one more mention of how cute he is... he's got zits! Ha!

B-Side:

The first time I check out your magazine and Mike Edwards is on the cover- a true epiphany!

My sincere congratulations to Sandra Garcia for masterfully showing that Mike's sense of humor is as strong as his opinions and Jesus Jones' music.

Thanks for giving me an opportunity to be blissed!

Shalmali Pal  
Los Angeles, CA

There, nicely said with some restraint and few adjectives. And no cute stuff. Oh, no, is Mikey Edwards going to replace you know who in the letters column...looks like...oh no! No! Yet some more letters about...about...about... them!

Dear B-Side:

It was great seeing both Gene Loves Jezebel and Michael Aston featured in the June/July issue of B-Side. It's good to know that we can look forward to an album (and a tour) from Michael's new band, the Immigrants. Needless to say, it is long overdue. Patience is something us GLJ/ Aston fans have learned to live with for the past year or so (with dates cancelled twice, etc!) I saw Gene Loves Jezebel on two dates this time around and they were just great.

I'm also a big fan of All About Eve. They have just released a new single and I hope their album will follow soon. Although I sorely miss Tim Bricheno, Marty Willson-Piper is a brilliant guitarist in his own right. I'd love to see an article on the Eves (and find out how marty got involved with them, etc.)

That's all really. Keep up the good work. I always look forward to the next issue of B-Side.

Sincerely,  
Bonnie Edsall  
Haledon, NJ

The editor said there was just an article in a Melody Maker in June about MWP and his All About Eve work. I think they're touring Britain as I type. (Or try to... the damned H and F are sticking like a bitch!) Speaking of Tim Bricheno, his name is mud to the editor after that Sisters show in NYC: she's managed to blame it all on him. She even wants to see them this time around! What a nut! I'll stick with the album and not tarnish my image of my dude Andy's greatness.

Nick:

Hello Dahlink:

I just finished your April/ May issue. You guys did well with the Sisters of Mercy. Lush, Danielle Dax line-up. You forgot one other band, my faves GLJ. They all played here in April at Irvine Meadows here in Southern California. I must say Danielle Dax was good, Lush were quite painful and redundant and no words can describe how magnificent GLJ were, but guess what? I left after Jay and the boys did. I mean why stay for a band you have no interest in, right?

But wait, here's the good part. I had front row for this little occasion, so instead of just leaving, I went up to these nosebleed seats, found two cool-looking people who obviously loved Sisters of Mercy and gave them my two seats. I must say it was great seeing how happy these two people were as I watched them go down to the front. So, if they are reading this, I hope they had a great time. GLJ just brings out the best in me. Keep up the good work. B-Side is the only magazine worth reading! Thanks!

Jay Aston's Voodoo Lover,  
Cindi  
Carlsbad, CA

Oh sigh. How sweet of you. I may become violently ill... GLJ don't bring out the best in me, love! Not when I hear about them so much...gee! I can't believe that the stunning Danielle Dax opened for them? I think not!

So, what do all you lovely kids think of that new Banshees album? I think their new producer should be shot, don't you think? At the very least! Where's the drama? Where's the mystery? Where's Mike Hedges? Why? Someone tell me please! Is it just me? Sob, choke! I hope this tour is at least killer!



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# SPOT LIGHTS

## Berkley, CA EMIGRE GRAPHICS/ MUSIC

If any of you out there follow type design or publication design, then you might have heard of *Emigre* magazine. *Emigre* originally started up as a... magazine's too weak a word, a concept to cover international artists. *Emigre*'s the type of publication where the design equals the words, where you are educated in how to view *what* you read. Words aren't words anymore, they're design with the restraints of columns and leading thrown out. *Emigre* eventually exploded into a computer design journal, and now it takes on just about anything and everything, and if all this glorious design mayhem wasn't enough the industrious editor/ designer Rudy VanderLans has now branched out into sound recordings.

Now think about this. This isn't merely a magazine about design, it's one hell of a *designed* magazine, with each issue lovingly crafted and in the case of issue 16, for example, the cover was hand printed on letterpress by Independent Project's Bruce Licher over a four day period. Any one famaliar with letter press is

groaning right about now. *Emigre* experiments with type, *Emigre* Graphic's Zuzana Licko designs her own superb typefaces (and sells them for Macs, computer heads) and now *Emigre* comes out with its own music. When magazines in the past have come out with a label it's been more along the lines of the punk/ hardcore ethic. It follows, a magazine that looks like *Maximum Rock and Roll* is going put out music that sounds like it looks.

And so it is with *Emigre*. This is music that is challenging, diverse and beautifully crafted. Production work is immaculate, and the releases all sound completely different. If you've ever curled up with a good Tuxedo Moon album, you'll get into a release like Binary Race. You want to dance to a different drummer? Then check out the sounds of Fact Twenty Two. Like Depeche mode on mind-expanding drugs, which God knows they need. They'll heard this and be totally jealous of what James Towning has done with electronic dance landscapes. Stephen Sheehan has been in Digital Sex and now works with a new band called The World, but on his *Emigre* release he brings to mind the best flavorings of the dark, obsessive Belgium vocalists of early '80's sound. Completely intriguing. Then to ramble in a new

direction there's the Basehead release *Play With Toys*. This needs a few more listens before I'll commit, but it's different, that's for sure, in a sinister, sneaky way.

Your best bet for knowledge: check out back issue 16, which has features on a few of the artists recording for *Emigre*. And any publication that features a page on our own Freddy "the Bastard" Carter has my heart forever.

From this big design beast of a magazine comes new sounds for a new year. What's next? That's the beauty, you'll never know until it hits you right in the brain. You can read it, love it, listen to it, admire it... that's *Emigre*. But you might have to look hard for it so it's best to make contact and get yourself a subscription and details on the CD collection. I'll stop drooling now and get back to my own columns and leading. (I just can't let them go!)(Rudy VanderLans,

c/o *Emigre*, 48 Shattuck Square, #175, Berkeley, CA 94704 (415)-845-9021)

-Sandra Garcia

## Valmiera, Latvia POSTMAN'S AVENUE

Just a brief mention since we're looking to printed matter. There are many fanzines tucked away in every area of the world. This one came from Latvia, and it's intersting to see what's going on. Editor Agnis Buda laments that there's no music magazines in Latvia, so they're trying. Why not drop the Agnis a letter and let *Postman's Avenue* know you're out here caring that they're in there. (Agnis Buda, *Postman's Avenue* (Pastieku Avenija), Stadiona 4, 228600 Valmiera, Latvia, Europe)

-Sandra Garcia

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# SIGHT OF SOUND

## RED, HOT & BLUE (6 West Home Video)

It all began when a New York based lawyer, art critic and writer, John Carlin, and a London-based film maker, Leigh Blake, got together and had an idea. They wondered what Cole Porter's classic songs would sound like if they were reworked by some of today's artists. Those artists included the creme of the crop of the dance, rap, alternative, and international markets, and the result of their efforts was the eighteen-song compilation *Red Hot & Blue* released last year on Chrysalis.

Released among an onslaught of compilations to commemorate just about everyone (*Where the Pyramid Meets The Eye*, *Deadicated*, *Tame Yourself*, etc), *Red Hot & Blue* came about to "benefit AIDS research and relief." Both Carlin and Blake had friends with HIV and AIDS, and they were inspired by the new moral dimension that rock and pop had taken on during the eighties.

The concept of the benefit would not be another one of those charity concerts, but a new and novel idea to get through to a nineties audience- a 90 minute television special chock full of glossy videos, well-known artists and special appearances by such celebrities as Kyle McLaughlin, Richard Gere, John Malkovich, Bill Irwin, and (because Madonna couldn't make it in her new outfit) Jean Paul Gaultier.

The special was aired last Fall on ABC, and was immediately deemed long winded. Education about AIDS is important for there are too many misconceptions about the way it is spread and the way it is contracted, but in *Red Hot & Blue's* attempt, the education seemed whining and melodramatic. That was the fault of the actors in the bunch. The efforts by the musicians saved the benefits, as their concern and dedication to raising awareness about AIDS was straightforward and convincing.

6 West Home Video released an edited version of the special in April 1991, and thankfully, most of the celebrity speeches were removed from the final cut. The music took center stage, and many of the artist flavored their new versions of the Cole Porter classics with messages about AIDS and homophobia. Artists like Neneh Cherry, Erasure, the Jungle Brothers, and k.d.lang used statistics and other messages in their videos, while Jimmy Somerville and Sinéad O'Connor featured gay couples dancing or embracing (a first for modern videos, most would say). Others, like David Byrne, Jody Watley, Aztec Camera, U2, and Lisa Stansfield turned in stellar performances with no adornments.

The best moments of the tape are the videos by Kirsty McColl & The Pogues and Tom Waits, but most of all the offering by Grandma and Grandpa Punk, Deborah Harry & Iggy Pop. The first two artists wake up the classics 'Miss Otis Regrets' / 'Just One Of Those Things' and 'It's

Alright With Me' with elaborate staging and mighty camera effects, while Debbie and Iggy let their natural charisma rework the classic 'Well, Did You Evah!' to their own specifications.

The video even includes a cameo by the ever exciting Lenny Kravitz and just bubbles over with enthusiasm as a clip of Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby in *High Society* segues into screaming guitars and the planet Mars taking over NYC. What a swell party it was, indeed.

Debbie made her thoughts about AIDS clear after the video: "When I first heard about the nature of AIDS, and that it was a disease that was communicated through sexual intercourse... I was shocked and horrified; and I thought, 'This is the worst thing that could ever happen because I really love sex.'"

Doesn't everybody else in music as well? Anyway, a dandy promotional party for the video's release at Limelight brought out Mike Edwards and other members of Jesus Jones, Iggy Pop, Jean Paul Gaultier and the Deb woman herself, standing by the VIP door so inconspicuously for about an hour. All the proprietors of the project were out in full force, as was the media, and what a swell party it was for such a healthy cause.

-Arleen Colone

## DANCE INTERNATIONAL SLAMMIN' RAP (VPI / Harmony/ BMG Video)

Music videos have been growing briskly in the home video industry, and VPI/ Harmony are hoping to do well in this market with their new line of "video magazines," *Dance International* and *Slammin' Rap*. Meant to serve as chronicles of the musical genre of dance and hip-hop, these videos have interviews of various artists mixed in with onstage and be-

hind-the-scenes footage and video clips. It's sort of like what *Spin* or this magazine would be like if they used videotape instead of print.

*Dance International* #2 is very nice and flashy, with interviews of such dance acts as Deee-lite, S-Express and baby Ford, as well as a chat with Boy George about his More Protein record label, a cool scene report from Iceland (no Sugarcubes though) and an American dancehall/ reggae report. D.I. #3 does not have as much flashy "alternative" material as number two, but it does have interviews with Mica Paris and Adeva, profiles on the Tam Tam record label in the UK (its best known act on the label is Soho) and Nu Groove records in the US, a view of the dance scene in New Jersey (which is held in high regard by the British), and an explanation of the Jazz Rap phenomenon. Both releases are also seasoned with fashion and dance move tidbits.

*Slammin' Rap* #2 contains a shitload of interviews with a wide of variety of people in the hip-hop community including Monie "in the middle" Love, Ice Cube, CPO, NWA frontperson Eazy-E, George Clinton, Daddy Freddy and Tairee B. (whose interview comes off as a G-rated version of *Truth or Dare*). There's also Three Times Dope up in the Bronx live in concert, longform video previews, plus a couple of interviews with R&B acts trying to pass themselves off as rap such as Hi-5 and Tony! Toni! Tone!. Definitely recommended for those who don't already have MTV and their Yo! MYV Raps show or a comparable cable outlet.

Both *Dance International* and *Slammin' Rap* give a good representation of the dance and hip-hop genres respectively. Colorful and fast moving (although my only complaint is that I wish there were more straightforward musical sequences),

each tape runs about sixty minutes, and they're a treat for the eyes and ears. (Contact VPI/Harmony, 8730 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 290, Los Angeles, CA 90069)

-Christopher Krakora

## JUST SAY YES (Vols. 1 & 2) (Sire Home Video)

Let's face it, if you've been keeping close track of *120 Minutes* for a while (if you can stomach it) you've probably seen a lot of these clips. Ian Mac, Replacements, Morrissey, Erasure, Danielle Dax, Judybats, Aztec (Snoozers) Camera, Ride ect., etc. There are a few clips here like My Bloody Valentine or Book of Love which might have seen the light of day once or twice, if they were lucky, and when the hell did Sire snatch up underground loves Bigod 20? What a shock. They've got that dangerously long reach, eh? Scary.

The funny things are the little interviews between the clips, where the artists who are on the tapes comment on each other's songs. Somebody tape John Wesley Harding's mouth shut, tell Joey Ramone his drooling over Sire was totally uncool and get Ride some public speaking training. Danielle Dax looks beautiful, Ice-T is his usual brash self and I love how he claims he sampled Ministry but try to find it on his latest epic work. But don't try to find A.I.J. commenting on anyone or especially on his beloved label... although I would have been impressed if they got him to speak. I would have wanted to see the terms promised! How long can you hold your breath?

But for the low price of these (like \$14.95) and clocking in at 50 minutes apiece, give them to friends who need a swift cross-section of (for lack of originality) alternative music, even if it's a one-side label overview. For people who need trendy training..

-Sandra Garcia



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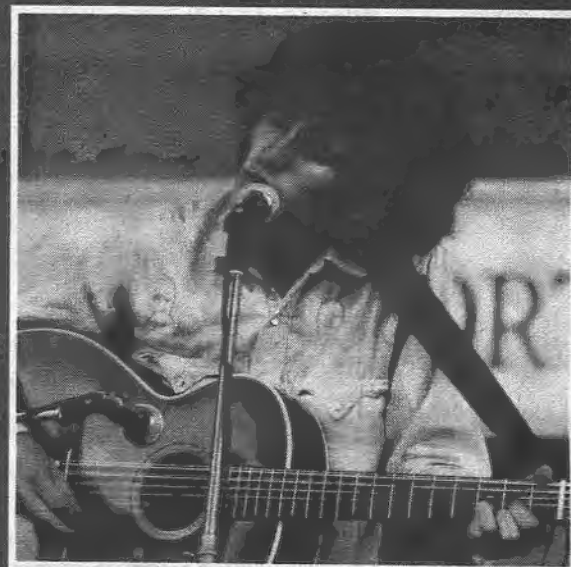
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# P/R/O/F/I/L/E/S

-by Arleen Colone

If all the world's melodies could be lush, what a world we would live in. Unfortunately, that is not usually the case with most modern records, but Book of Love sure knows how to keep the tradition alive. If techno-pop is truly dead, then BOL makes a helluva good testimony for its afterlife.

*Candy Carol*, the latest LP from Book of Love, seems poised to put the band over the top. The melodies are tempered and the hooks divine, and the vocals of Susan Ottaviano as rich and distinct as ever (along with the stylings of percussionist Jade Lee and songwriter Ted Ottaviano). The tempo is danceable, and the overall sound more crystalline than on the previous material. "With this record, we strived to make something that we never heard before, something that only we could make" says Lauren Roselli, keyboardist and vocalist for Book of Love. "I feel that your own limitations are what make you do what you do best."

*Candy Carol* was slated for release last October, but was pushed back to avoid the dance music "glut" created by the Christmas rush.

"We hadn't been around for two years, and we didn't know if people were dying to hear our new record



Photo by Michele Taylor

"We're very happy with the LP as a whole," says Lauren. "It's like it's a little bit country, a little bit rock n' roll (but no Donnie & Marie!). It's too poppy for alternative stations, but not dancey enough for dance stations. So, I guess we're still making a major statement that nobody understands. That's part of being Book of Love."

Okay, Lauren, so how does the other half live?

"Well, we're very democratic, and it makes for a lot of fights. Since we've been together for so long, we know where it's going. It's not a formula — that's what I think is really fun about the band. We take chances, even if no one gets it; even if we don't get it!"

Where will the  
Psychedelic Furs, EMF,  
The Godfathers, The Divinyls,  
House of Love,  
Tribe After Tribe,  
Eleventh Dream Day,  
Butthole Surfers  
and New Model Army be  
hanging out in October?

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## BOOK OF LOVE

at Christmastide," remembers Lauren. "We were kind of upset because we were really ready for an October release, but we're glad we waited. This music may seem old to us, but we don't write stuff that can be thrown away. We're not that disposable."

Disposable is definitely not the word. Book of Love's music has always been of a Baroque sort of styling, characterized by moody and mysterious themes, but always optimistic in the end. The first two albums, *Book Of Love* and *Lullaby*, were alternative yet with good pop hooks, and contained such varied subjects as 'Modigliani (Lost In Your Eyes),' 'Boy,' and 'Pretty Boys and Pretty Girls.'

"We all went to art school, and I think your experiences and the things you get exposed to really start inspiring different things. 'Modigliani...' kind of came out of that. It's kind of like the Andy Warhol School of Pop, where pop is anything you make it."

"We live in the East Village, and there's the syndrome of 'every - boy - you - like - turns - out - to - be - gay' — the song 'Boy' was about one of those experiences. It's not only limited to that interpretation, but it was basically about a girl who wanted to be a boy because she wanted to have a boyfriend. It was a no win situation, so at the end of the song she was glad that she was still a girl. I really shouldn't be giving away the secrets of our songs!"

The latter two singles dominated the dance floors, but were many steps ahead of commercial radio.

Lauren concurs. "When 'Boy' came out, there wasn't anything else like it. It was risque with the lyric, and as white sounding as it was...know what I mean? 'I Touch Roses' was the next single, and it came out right before that new psychedelia movement. I'm not saying that we were avant-garde, but that we were ahead of some things. It's just that people couldn't get it at that time." Nowadays, the world has to consider *Candy Carol*, with the first single 'Alice Everyday' (which has such wonderful names as Dulcinea, Cymbaline, and Emunence). There is also 'Sunny Day' (in which Ted sings and is also heard for five seconds in *Silence of the Lambs*; Lauren plays the woman who takes Jodie Foster to Buffalo Bill's house), and the peace-happy sing-a-long 'Turn The World.'

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-by Arlene Colone

"In tandem with Power of Dreams, the finest display of pure emotional inspiration to come out of Ireland since Arthur Guinness hit upon his deadly recipe." The author of the above line certainly coined the perfect way to describe the current pride of Ensign Records, Into Paradise. The people at the label reckon they have the next Waterboys or sort of Sinéad O'Connor, even though the band stands on its own next to superstars.

Into Paradise are a four piece band that claims to have risen out of the famed pub scene in Ireland, but their

music possesses a quality that rises above the lot of \$50 a night "bar bands." The songs on the current album, *Into Paradise*, are heartfelt, melodic rockers that make heavenly use of the guitar and intense musical energy. Lead singer and guitarist Dave Long puts some of his deepest

emotions into the songs and lets the listener experience them as if they were happening before our eyes.

"I think music should do that all the time," says Dave. "If it doesn't have an effect on you it's really losing something. It should send shivers up your back. There's not much music

Into Paradise, Long, Rachael Tighe, James Eadie and Ronan Clarke were called Backwards Into Paradise. Long and Tighe were the nucleus of the band, and met up in 1986. They claimed to have got on well then, and even lived together in one of those wonderful squats that many people take over and fix up. Of course they occasionally got on each others nerves, but that soon dissipated.

Personal relationships seem to be a focal point in many of Into Paradise's songs, and in such works as 'The Circus Came To Town,' 'Bring Me Closer' and 'Change' the meaning and emotion easily show through.

"Well, I think personal relationships are amazing. I was always in-

## INTO PARADISE

now that can do that. There's not that many bands that can have that effect on people. Joy Division did, and *Nebraska* by Bruce Springsteen did, and a few others."

Among the tracks on the LP, which is a compilation of tracks from the first EP *Blue Light* and first LP *Under The Water*, are a number of songs that definitely shiver the timbers, and among them is the charm 'Hearts and Flowers.'

"Everybody seems to be picking up on that one, eh! I like the feeling of it, you know what I mean? I think the first thing they come across is the melody. My actual favorite of the whole record, for reason of the lyrics and stuff would have to be 'The World Won't Stop,' and 'Close By' would be really close, too."

The powers that be at Chrysalis were so confident of their new signee that they picked the songs on the band's domestic release in the hopes of breaking Into Paradise into the States. "We don't really mind that they picked the songs for us, for the main reason that most of us have never been to America. Also, we had already recorded the album, so all of it was really done on our ground—no one had anything to do with that part of the band. It's good to have someone from their side, like Nigel and Chris from Ensign. The band probably would have had fights for about two years trying to pick the songs!"

Relations can get that intense between the band members? No "intense rehearsals" like the Heartthrobs to the point where they are ready to kill each other...

"No, we do get on really well. When we're working we work solidly all the time, but usually we meet up and see each other socially all the time. The whole band drink together at the same time, and that sort of stuff. Funny, because that's how we met! We're not mad drinkers or anything, but we do it just for a night out."

Before they began to hit the town as

interested in what's behind the relationship, like what can go on, what can go wrong—that sort of stuff," says Dave. "On the album [*Under the Water*], there's a song called 'Gently Falls,' which is what I consider the best song the band has ever written. It goes on for about five minutes, and the lyrics are basically about a girl, a sixteen year old, for whom something has gone really wrong in her life. It could be something small, like her schoolmates told her she was fat or something, but at that time it affects her so bad that she jumps off a bridge and commits suicide. But when you're far away, something like that could look kind of beautiful—like "gently falls into the ocean;" it can have a calming effect to see something fall gently, like this lonely figure on a bridge, and you were miles away. But if you were up close, it would be completely different because you would be able to hear her breathing, trying to get up and splashing in the water—it would be grotesque."

Such morose situations do not possess every song on this LP, but they do have a positive effect on the listener. "I think that all singer have their depressing times—the reason why they record a song is to get over the bad time, so when they record they're finished with that era and they can move on. The great thing about that is people who hear the music and buy the record can say, 'Oh, he felt bad and he got by.' Just like Bowie, when he was so out of it his head on drugs he went to Berlin and recorded *Low*. It took him 12 months, and he claims that he's never listened to it since the day he left the studio because it would bring back nightmares. But that helped him get over drugs, and then he left Berlin and went back to the States."

Into Paradise hope to have more things to look forward to when they tour the States soon, with a newly recorded LP.

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-by Al Quint

It's not a pretty world out there and Treponem Pal seem to know that, drawing on the ugliness, the isolation, the darker aspects of the human existence as the central force that drives their equally ugly, monolithic, yet enticing music. Brutal and heavy aggression thrives in Treponem Pal's musical universe. A potent blending of industrial intensity, heavy riffing, with harshly-delivered vocals barking out mantras like 'What Does It Mean?' and 'Love' in a nettled manner. The band's recent album, *Aggravation*, is more relentless in its assault than its homonymously-titled predecessor. (both available on Roadracer) It's a spectacular, spark-generating collision of many elements-- the mechanical bombast of early Swans and Killing Joke, the post- doomsday guitar squall of Voivod--these come to mind while



## TREPONEM PAL

being assaulted by Treponem's visceral onslaught.

The French five piece, whose name is taken from a sexually- transmitted disease, began in '86 and an early lineup of the band included a sampler along side of the standard guitar/ bass/ drums/ vocals set-up. After a few shifts in personnel, the current Treponem Pal people are vocalist Marco Neves, guitarists Michel Bassin and Laurent, bassist Stephane Cressend and drummer Didier Serbourdin, the latter two folks being the most recent additions to the band. In fact, drumming duties on *Aggravation* were handled by Celtic Frost skinsman Stephen Priestly.

I recently had the opportunity to interview Marco via phone from Paris and, despite his occasional difficulty in understanding my questions, he offered some provocative, intriguing viewpoints. Coming from post-punk and hardcore backgrounds (Marco was in a band that "sounded like Bauhaus" at one point), Treponem Pal have managed to create two album's worth of sonic face-melt, despite coming from a country that, musically, is "Five years after the fashions," according to the vocalist.

In this increasingly-segmented musical world, categorization or slapping some pat label on a band becomes commonplace, as a means of convenience or packaging. So, somewhere along the line, Treponem Pal have been coined with "industrial thrash" tag, something that Marco doesn't necessarily find applicable: "I know we're obliged to have a name, to have a style. I could say we're not industrial, because, for me, industrial music is more experimental than Treponem Pal. And we don't really play thrash. For Treponem Pal, the right way is to make power-

ful music, with lots of feeling. We don't care about hardcore, about thrash, but it's clear we take some influence from this music. The aggressiveness of hardcore, the riffs of metal, the ambience from industrial and experimental. I could say it's 'bastard music.'"

Individuality, be it in terms of music or life in general, comes up on 'Out With No Flag.' Says Marco, "I'm not a punk, I'm not a rocker, I'm just a person who says, 'Fuck you, I'm not part of your fashion, I'm not in your political parties, I don't care about all these things, I'm just a person and I don't want to be just a fashion-- a metalhead, a punk, a hardcore or a guy from the left or right. I've got my personality and I choose by myself.' It's hard for a lot of people. I see them losing their personalities because there's a lot of tension. They're looking for the right way and, if they look for this, they will lose their personality."

Some interesting viewpoints on sexuality and relationships come up in the band's lyrics, as well. The band pulls no punches in its explicit, frank discussion on sexual matters. Marco claims this openness has led to some misconceptions: "We've got some problems, sometimes, because people think we are really sexist and it's absolutely not sexist. I choose to speak about sex really harshly. I like to say, 'I like to suck, I like to fuck,' it's not shameful for me to speak about this and that's the problem with a lot of people. They're afraid to speak about it because it's taboo. This is a problem in the USA, a lot of puritanism. I can speak openly about it. Sometimes you look at a girl and you see her legs and you see her body and you'd like to fuck her. The worst people always say she's a slut, but, in fact, you're a slut, too. It's a natural

feeling. We have to speak normally about it. It's not sexist, it's not obscene, it's just life."

The band have made a video for

their version of Kraftwerk's 'Radioactivity' that offers a visual complement to their grainy, grim musical vision. Slow-motion, blurry images create the intended impact. And the band plan a US tour sometime this year. Prepare for the sensory meltdown.

Photo by Michele Taylor

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have saved his life in this situation; just imagine if he had told this animal to go to hell. Simon gives a resigned laugh, declaring, "Apart from that, the gigs have been going really well."

And Also the Trees is one of those bands that people know the name of but know nothing further than that. Formed in 1979, and recording their first self-titled in 1983, it's a touch unreal that the band has never graced these shores before. Simon muses, "It's mainly been because of our situation, living in a fairly remote area as far as music is concerned. In the rural Midlands, and also being with a smaller record label, we've never been involved in the music business in a big way, we just made music. We never had the opportunity before."

The members are also incredibly polite, quiet men, about as far from pushy you can get. I felt like a boisterous American while talking with them. The band is almost starting from scratch in America, but in Europe, there's been much appreciation. Fanatical appreciation. But for all that the band is so passionate about the land they call home, the British populace has yet to fully embrace And Also The Tree's unique form of country music. Not country as we know it, but the deep ancient country that makes up pockets of Britain, where villages still have thatched roofs and hedge rows crowd out the sun while sweeps of fields race to meet the sky. "It's strange, isn't it? We've never quite understood that, but I suppose it's down to situations and circumstances. When we've gone to the rest of Europe, we were a considerably better band when we played there in the mid '80's, unlike when we were playing mainly Britain in the early '80's. I think a lot of people in Britain have heard our name but haven't heard us but they've already decided what we're like and that's a bit difficult as we can't go and have a fresh start like we can here."

The area of Britain that inspires Simon's lyrics and tempers the rest of the band's sound with a unique, haunting touch has history dating back to medieval times with plague victims being buried in meadows behind their farmhouse. Simon has no urge to move away from the area that he loves. "I quite like visiting London, but I never would want to go there to stay. I need the calm, I need the peace and the countryside. But it looks like the rest of the band, except for me, might be moving down to London. And I don't know how that will change things. But probably not because we'll still use Worcestershire as a base, we'll still do most of our writing there."

Simon notes the reasons as personal

# And <sup>t</sup>he TREES

-By Sandra A. Garcia

This situation was turning into And Almost The Trees. This artistic and talented band got swept up in the visa crisis occurring before the infamous squabble in the Middle East took off. "Everybody absolutely had to fight to get in," frets Justin Jones, guitarist extraordinaire. "And then we nearly missed our plane! At one point I thought we definitely wouldn't make it. Then I discover we're playing 13 dates... it is a lucky number for me though, so..."

Thankfully for the rest of the band, Justin's lucky number pulled them through in the pinch. But of course once in, the reward for being the sweet patient people that they are wasn't coming. First time in America and possessions are stolen from dressing rooms more than once; their van is broken into in Washington and during one part of our phone chat a large bloke with murderous intent is threatening vocalist Simon Huw-Jones at his pay phone post. Simon later discovered that this big mean individual apparently chased a guy who had shot him... and caught him. Simon's fine manners may

for bassist Steve Burrows and drummer Nick Havas, and brother Justin wants to go to a college of music to study film soundtracks. Justin describes, "I listen to film music almost more than anything else. I'd like to try and adapt my music to film. It's a similar process to the way the lyrics are done, in that I come in and wrap the music around Simon's words. So it shouldn't be too difficult to do. I hope so. But the school that I would like to go to has only one position a year."

I jest that Justin needs to find out the names of the others to cut back on the competition. "Yes, I'd like to, but I can't find out who they are! One spot a year, it's incredible. But if I don't get it I certainly won't get a complex."

And there's no limits to what he'd like to do once started: "Starring, produced by, directed by, music by... yeah!" he chuckles. It's a shame that this tour didn't take the band out to Hollywood. Perhaps that's a blessing as they might have lost their supremely talented guitarist to the silver screen!

Originally from just outside Birmingham, Simon and Justin moved



out to the countryside when they were children, growing up under the influence of the rural landscape. The Birmingham area is a prime example of Britain going out of control and devouring the land, and the specter of progress haunts Simon. "I'm constantly aware of it spreading out towards us as well. The calm is never quite calm, there's always an undercurrent of threat," he describes. "The red lights in the sky get brighter and brighter every night," he shudders. "But you can really sense the past where we live and the past has quite an influence on the lyrics."

And the band has gotten involved on a political level to prevent the destruction of their land. "There was a plan to build a thousand house satellite village, as they call them, which is basically just a big estate, on a field just near where we live. So we went and organized a gig and played in Worcester for the first time in six years for charity and that was our protest. People tend to think that young people don't care and it's just that people need an outlet to show that they do care. It was quite successful. It wasn't only us that stopped it from happening, but it isn't going to happen anymore. I think too many people finally protested," he reasons.

Simon feels that the fact that Britain is smaller contributes to people being able to stop the wanton destruction more quickly than in America. The results are more dramatic on that smaller scale, whereas over here the destructive powers that be merely pack up and move on to another untouched area. "Some catastrophic things have happened in the past and they keep on happening, and it's difficult to believe what people plan to move forward. I would like to get more involved in that to save things that are precious, not just human beings but the natural habitats for animals, the wildlife. That's really important to a country and its people."

Perhaps the effect of the Green party helps things out, but Simon jests, "How organized it is I don't know, but there is a party, yes. It's getting better. The Green party is stronger in Germany but it's getting stronger in Britain as well."

Being that Simon is getting to tour the heavily built up Eastern corridor, he's getting to see how good America is at creating ecological disasters. He suffered a bit of culture shock in Washington and New York, but dryly describes the tour as "Educational. Very interesting."

Justin feels the response the band received in Chicago was great. And in New York? "I loved the Limelight. It was great! I love playing places like that. And they have that fantastic Alice in Wonderland room there as well, with the scenes on the walls." Simon didn't really know what to expect on this first American tour. "What I am pleased about is that we have more friends here than I thought, people who know our stuff. Even if it's only a handful of people at each gig it's reassuring that people applaud when certain songs start cause they know what it is," he chuckles.

The emotional level that the band's projects from the stage sucks in the curious who just came to check this band out, and fortifies the devotion of the already converted. Between Simon's recreation of his emotive lyrics, and Justin's swirling, ringing guitar sounds, strangled out of his guitar in an almost painful fashion, the band summon up images of a wild wind driving across the dramatic British countryside, cleansing their own souls while creating new images steeped in the past. Of the live performances Simon confesses, "It's very tiring. We use every drop of energy. I'm having a bit of an energy crisis today, in fact. It's not lack of sleep, I think it's lack of salt!"

He's not getting enough salt from the average American food? Obviously he's not snacking on fries and chips!

Something that the band has had enough of is the comparisons to gothic bands. That feel may creep across on the occasional track, but seeing them live completely dispels any lingering notion. Dedicatedly dramatic and dynamic, the constant references to the Cure, due to the fact that the band was semi-discovered by Robert "Bob" Smith years ago, are blasted away with each succeeding song. And the size of the crowds doesn't enter into the picture, as they feel the

same playing before 1500 people in Paris or a cluster of 100 in Philadelphia. "It doesn't matter. Once we're onstage it doesn't enter into it. We just play the songs as well as we can and represent the emotions in the songs as best we can regardless of the people there. Of course when you get a huge crowd cheering you get a big rush!" Simon laughs.

Justin's been frustrated by not being able to get over to America sooner. "It's been difficult, in trying to get ahead. It's been a lot of hard work. But people here really like us. The tour's been quite convenient really as we're between writing LP's, and we decided to do a cross section of material from 1984 onwards, as we don't feel that we're really pushing something really new. We're not taking completely unknown stuff and ramming it down people's throats. We're still doing things off *Virus Meadows* which was our second LP. That seems to be our most popular LP, but technically it seems to be our worst, the way it was recorded," he jests.

The emotions between creativity and live performance may differ



but Simon enjoys both. "Live it's trying to reproduce the emotions that were there when the song was written. The one is just different. It's a great feeling when the writing goes well, but I have a lot of days, even weeks when I don't write anything that pleases me at all. But the actual writing of the lyrics and live performances are my two favorite areas of being in the group."

The group also enjoys finding alternative methods of capturing their special sound, like recording in an old manor hall for their *Farewell to the Shade* release. Justin describes, "It was a very strange vibe, this old hall with all these paintings, but a great sound! But it was also a great atmosphere other than a studio, which is very sterile, like a laboratory."

"It was bizarre, we had the drum kit set up in the pantry. It looked really peculiar, crammed in there with all these jars filled with homemade jam and stuff like that. The sound on the record that you hear reflects that ambience. I've got some pictures of it all, and they're really funny!" he chuckles. "It was great fun." But it won't be happening there again as the friend who owned the house has since sold it and it's been made into a hotel. "We could book out the whole hotel but that would be bloody costly!" complains Justin playfully. "And I think they'd be a

(Continued on pg. 17)



-By Arleen Colone

"Actually, it was Miki who was friends with them, and she just mentioned my name," claims Meriel Barham, guitarist extraordinaire, on her indoctrination into the Pale Saints. "Actually his name is Ethan. Oh well, the title of that song ['Etheriel'] is a bit blatant, innit it? If you've got any juicy details, I'll be interested to know them...(chuckle, chuckle)."

Erm, uh, that's about as far as we think we'll go off on that gossipy tangent. Personal lives should not be public property, even as an excuse for horrible lazy journalism. But when you're a member of a hot guitar band the Pale Saints, and a former member of the new "supergroup" (guess ABBA will move over after all) Lush, you're private life is, at the moment, everyone's concern.

"When I was in Lush, I was just singing. We were at college together, and it seemed like a bit of fun at the time," says Meriel. "I had never sung before because I was more interested in playing the guitar. They already had two guitars in the band, so I gave it a go as a singer [with the rest of the band chuckling away in the background, as they said in another interview]. I never felt that comfortable with being the front person, especially when you're not playing the guitar. I felt quite vulnerable, and quite naked standing there. It didn't feel like my natural place at all."

Meriel's place was destined to be in the latest line-up of the awesome foursome the Pale Saints.

tionally, "a band going their own way, letting slip their anchors and drifting on their on powerful tide of weird melody."

They forgot to mention the angry element. "I think anger can be very creative, but very destructive as well," cites Meriel. "Personally, I would never be able to write a love song, because I wouldn't feel comfortable."

It's obvious that she didn't play on the band's earlier works which included such songs as 'Language of Flowers' with swirls and feedback lunches. The first record, 'Barging Into The Presence of God,' an EP, was released in September 1989, and was followed by the first LP, *The Comforts of Madness*. This record, it is said, defined



# PALE SAINTS ALL PALENESS IN

Gelled together at the start from a newspaper ad, the band was comprised of guitarist Graeme Naysmith and drummer Chris Cooper, and enigmatic bassist and vocalist Ian Masters (that name just conjures up so many images you can't pinpoint, don't it?). The threesome was joined by a second guitarist, Ashley Horner, for live work, but bulged permanently when Meriel joined at a later date.

"I get really pissed off when people ask, 'What's it like to be a girl in a dominantly male band?'" cites Meriel on her early days. "I never think of it in those terms; I think of myself as a just another musician, one amongst four."

The Pale Saints have been a band to save distinctive guitar pop from an early death. When most of America was in high school or college, England saw itself as the "C-86" scene, which seemed to be the nothing scene that preceeded Manchester. Some beautiful bands like the Shop Assistants, the Primitives, the Flatmates, and My Bloody Valentine made music out of noise, even if it was just "a pretty sort of melody riding above harsh guitars." Morrissey called 'All Day Long' by the Shoppies his favorite single of 1985, and many people admit that the Primitives were not worth listening to once the first album came out. BUT, as time would tell, that legendary scene would pave the way for more bands who were in love with heavy guitar and sweetheart melodies, plus a desire to reinvent pop as something good. The Pale Saints are one of those bands.

The Pale Saints were described by their record company 4AD as "the four piece from Leeds...with their subtle version of pop, full of all the right requirements: passion, beauty, color and taste." Addi-

tionally, "a band going their own way, letting slip their anchors and drifting on their on powerful tide of weird melody."

The next record was called *Half-Life*, and was the first that featured the new Meriel. By that time, the Pale Saints sound was known for Ian's bittersweet vocals and the band's heavy guitar attack, but this time was accented by Meriel's subtle harmonies. Next came *Half-Life Remembered*, another EP of not-so-comfortable madness, and the band was on their way.

"When we did *Half-Life*, that was my first experience with recording an actual record," remembers Meriel. "I had done demo tapes before, but this was the real first. I think when you start out, you want to capture the spontaneous, live sound. It depends on who you work with, and how you relate to the producer, the engineer and everything. It's quite clinical - it's lots of bits that you piece together. It's sort of unnatural. I enjoy it, but I'd much rather be playing live - it's much more exciting and exhilarating."

Ahh, exhilaration. Like a breath of fresh air. As they all say over there, England produces some of the best music because "it must be something in the water" (cliches, cliches!). Cliches are a very intricate part of the label that the Pale Saints are on, though the band may beg to differ.

"Yeah, everyone sort of thinks of there being a particular 4AD sound," say Meriel. "I don't think any of us think of it in those terms. We think, 'We're a band and that's the label we're on.' People start saying that we sound like Lush because Lush is on the same label - then all the bands are lumped together. I think it's really lazy. Journalists want to create a little fantasy world of 4AD, but I think that's very narrow minded."

Those ethereal, arty sounds do pop up on *Half-Life Remembered*,



especially in the hidden untitled track. It is a haunting, spoken piece that tells of a boy and his dog, in which the dog's foot produces a giant anchor made out of bone.

"That was based on a dream that Chris had," cites Meriel. "We weren't really sure what the reception to that would be, but it didn't matter. If you like it, if you think it's interesting enough, then it's worth putting on the record; even if only for your own enjoyment. We put it out on a CD that was released only in Japan, and it was called 'Coddle Of The Sky.'"

Aside from the deep, emotive pieces, the Pale Saints are revered in many places for their sound, especially Japan, a country that treasures the more daring of English sounds.

"It was fantastic over there," remembers Meriel. "It's a bit of a 'downer' to be home, and the harsh reality that no one really cares about you. When you're in Japan, you get totally pampered. It's like a fantasy world for a couple of weeks, it was like living in a bit of a *Blade Runner*-type society, which is very clean and very organized. There didn't seem to be any signs of poverty, or else they were disguised and hidden. Otherwise, it seemed very flattering that people care about you a lot and follow you around."

The band played some live dates, in support of their new EP and CD. "It's difficult to explain the live experience, because, obviously, it's different when you're actually participating and when you're actually listening," says Meriel. "It's all so personal, as well. We'll come off stage and one person will think that it was a brilliant time and they really enjoyed it, and everyone else might not have gotten into it. I always think it's a good sign when you're playing and you feel anxious. We always feel anxious."

"Obviously, you always have to play as well as you can, so you tend to feel nervous beforehand because you want it to be really, really good."

How about the element of unpredictability?

"Yeah I much prefer that. It's very admirable when you see a band and they can reproduce the sound of their CD live - technically, you can appreciate that they're able to do that and execute the songs very well. At the same time, though, I find that quite lifeless and characterless... you might as well have a CD playing on stage."

"I felt that when I saw the Cocteau Twins, but with a band like that

# TO LIGHT

you're always going to get an audience that's going to be very respectful; that's the nature of their music. I'd prefer some mistakes... they can be more appealing. When you see a band and they're really getting into it, you don't notice the mistakes; you just notice the energy and the life that's going into it. You can see that the band is having a good time, and I think that quite appealing."

Wonder why the Pale Saints call it a "half-life", then? There seems to be so much more, live and recorded. As much life as Lush are enjoying, even without their old vocalist.

B

## AND ALSO THE TREES (Continued fr. pg. 15)

bit mystified if we wanted to book the *pantry* as a room!"

With Simon's lyrics being so descriptive and emotional, there seems to be the potential for him to take them beyond lyrics. "I haven't yet, but I'd like to," he expresses. "There's usually quite a lot of pressure for me to write new lyrics as the others are much more prolific than I am, and they're usually waiting for the lyrics," he laughs. "I've never had time to take things further. One day I'd quite like to though."

Simon also feels that perhaps the nature of their music scares some listeners away. People don't want to take the time and commitment that might be required with And Also The Tree's deep enchantment of sound. "But I also find that once people take it in, if they appreciate it they'll stay with us for quite a long time, and will want to hear everything that we've done."

Their latest album title is also intriguing as it almost sounds like a death knell to the group. *Farewell to the Shade* from And Also the Trees... don't trees make shade? Simon laughs dismissively, declaring, "I hope it's *not* the last of us!"

The last of Britain should not be ignored.

B

## THE MOCK TURTLES TURTLE SOUP



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PSYCH OUT  
THE SEERS

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**-By Brian Greenlee**

According to Dave Bierman, front man of the Junk Monkeys, this is how it went: "Why do you dress so goofy? Why are you so cavalier about everything? Why don't you look cool?"

Now, from whom did those questions come? Mothers? Fathers? Brothers? Sisters? Girlfriends? Naahh... from their record company, of course! "We sent the label (Metal Blade) about 300-400 pictures of us for publicity photos. Everyone, they said, 'No, no.' They sent a photographer to Detroit to shoot us. We showed up... 'No, no... your hair's wrong. Change your clothes...' 'Whatever way we're looking isn't the way a rock 'n' roll band should look.'"

The Junk Monkeys, Dave Bierman (vocals and guitar), Dave Boutette (guitars), Kevin Perri (bass) and Dan Allen (drums), along with Buffalo's Goo Goo Dolls are the point men in Metal Blade's foray into "alternative."

Which, basically, means that the Monkeys, "four ugly guys from Detroit," to quote Bierman, give fuckall about fashion and concentrate on their buzzsaw music. Kind of a contrast with the *metal* side of Metal Blade, where, evidently, fashion comes first and the bands give fuckall about their music ("Strike A Pose!"). Come to think of it, Metal Blade would probably feel more comfortable with the Junk Monkeys' predecessors...

"We started out as a glam-rock outfit right out of high school," related Bierman. "...The Mystery Girls... (sarcastically) pretty original. There were about 150,000 other bands called Mystery Girls. We put out one record called *Bag*, which came in a brown paper bag. It was a pile of

shit! We were young, maybe 17, 18.

"After about three years of that bullshit, I called up the band one day and said, 'We're quitting... we can dress any way we want... let's get rid of this glam-rock bullshit image.' Everyone said, 'Yeah, yeah! Let's do it!' We had a crummy manager and we called him up and said, 'We're breaking up' and got rid of him." So, exit the Mystery

Photo by Michele Taylor



# JUNK MONKEYS

## 4 UGLY GUYS FROM DETROIT



Girls and enter the Junk Monkeys. Signed to Metal Blade, in 1989 the band released *Soul Cakes*, which compiled the Monkeys' first two self-released EPs. Now comes *Five Star Fling* and, ever since then the band "has been buzzing along as the Junk Monkeys," says Bierman.

Not that the guys didn't have some qualms about signing to a label known strictly for its high lead content. "We talked to them a long time about it. They said, 'We want to go alternative with some of our acts, and we're going to try real hard.' The first album, with the Goo Goo Dolls and us, we both got lumped into the metal thing.

"Metal magazines wrote about us. In the metal magazines both band got *great* reviews! But, now, *Spin* (who?) has written things about both of us."

Bierman says that he and the rest of the band are more than glad to tip their caps to the gooey ones from upstate New York. "The Goo Goo Dolls kicked open a lot of doors for us. We toured with them earlier in the year. And they're doing amazingly well. Hopefully, when they (the consuming public) see us, they'll say, 'Hey, the Goo Goo Dolls are on this label,' and give us a shot." So, aside from being lousy dressers with cheesy (hairdos... hairdon'ts?) and being totally uncool, the Junk Monkeys seem to be having fun.

"I think people underrate the people who are in bands... to a point." You mean they usually write them off as... drunken assholes?

"Yeah. And we kind of fit that image... we're drunken fuck-ups in

Photo by Sandra C. Davis



just about every other aspect of life than this. At least we went into this. We didn't become engineers. We said, 'Well, we all got one thing we can do. Not even *great*, but at least adequately enough that people will go for it.'

Drunken fuck-ups or not, the Junk Monkeys are serious enough that they want to make the band a full-time occupation. They're not quite there yet. As in they still have to work the "shit job" to make ends meet. "Yeah, we still have to have shit-jobs. I deliver flowers. In fact, two guys in the band deliver flowers. I only have to do it two to three times a week...so I work about 14 hours a week.

"It (the band) is pretty much a full-time occupation. It's getting to the point where we can pay our rent, but not much else. That's been our goal since day one. In every year we're getting closer. If this album pans out...so far it's looking really good...we'll see what happens."

And if they get to the top? Fame, riches, babes...? "I think that anybody who applies any *importance* to rock 'n' roll is silly. It's just rock 'n' roll. I enjoy it and I wouldn't want to do anything else. But some people live and die by rock 'n' roll bands. Some people are so goddamned *serious* about everything."

So, I guess we can't expect any fist-waving anthems from the Junk Monkeys?

"I don't try to tackle any "big" issues. I leave that to Bono (flashing a sardonic smile). He does such a darn good job at it... Unless there's a vocal hook, I think the words are secondary. But I try not to make them goofy or irrelevant.

"I'm a big fan of Dylan. I'm a big fan of The Clash and it's hard to do; hard to do *well*. It's hard to do well without being a hypocrite. It's hard to listen to The Clash on *Sandinista* then see them driving off in their limo to the suite in the Hilton. Who wants to listen to some 25-year-old kid from Detroit telling them what to think? Listen to George Will (Ugh!) or buy *Time*...figure it out for yourself."

While choosing not to mix politics and music, Bierman was not nearly so shy in expressing his opinion about the latest splendid little war in the Persian Gulf.

"I think it was a horrible, horrible waste of time and money and lives, but nobody seems to agree with me. I've gotten threatened in every bar in Detroit 'cause I'll be drunk with my friends and I'll sit there and say, 'I'll tell ya what I think of the fuckin' war: we shouldn't



even be there...and shove your yellow ribbons up your ass.' The fact that they're throwing American flags... everywhere you turn there's a fuckin' yellow ribbon. It's just a bunch of fuckin' bullshit. Especially the way they're commercializing the 'patriot' thing. God! It's terrible."

Hmm. Pretty serious stuff there. I guess he doesn't like those disgusting flag waving soft drink adverts cluttering the TV waves. But what makes this band tick? Verily, what is the *essence* of the Junk Monkeys? Dave? "Hell.. I don't know...Have fun...go for it...don't look back and don't do anything stupid.

"We're four ugly guys from Detroit. We haven't gotten this far on our good looks...that's for *damn* sure." Buy the album; try it out. Sell it if you don't like it. There's a big retail market for that." **B**

Photo by Sandra C. Davis

# ANACRUSIS

an-a-cru-sis, n. 1. an upbeat specifically one or more notes or tones preceding the first downbeat of a musical phrase.

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## Manic impressions

Featuring their version of the classic New Model Army song, "I Love The World"

CD's and cassettes available on Metal Blade/Warner Bros. Records



**-By Sandra A. Garcia**

Pity Meat Beat Manifesto's Jack Dangers. Meat Beat has created such a legendary live monster that there's an definite defensive reaction when questioned about the band's performances. Jack displays a good natured 'here we go again' weariness on the subject. Each individual has their own impressions of a band, and this band first impressed most on a visual level. So with visualist/physical dynamo Marcus leaving the band, it seems there would be a hole in the Manifesto's overall pattern. No so, claims Jack with record speed. 'No what Marcus actually did was just to perform on stage when we toured. He didn't have *anything* to do with the music. He was always into the more visual side of things. We're still going to be working with him on videos, we're just not going to be touring with dancers anymore. We just thought that we pushed that as far as we could take it. It's up to other people to maybe be inspired and to take it further along the same lines but doing it in different ways.'

'It's always changed, the only steady members have been me and Johnny cause we do the music and everything revolves around that,' he explains.

But even Jack has to admit, the last few times Meat Beat came to the States the visual side of the performance seemed as important as the musical side of the band. 'It sure looked like it meant much more than mere window dressing. Yeah, maybe I don't know. It is a necessity to do something no one had ever done before live. It existed as that.'

Photo by Michele Taylor



concept grew complex to the point where Meat Beat became numbing onstage. Total sensory overload to the point that you almost needed to mentally tune out. 'Oh yeah. Because you do something that no one else has done, people put too much of an emphasis on it. You take a group like Nine Inch Nails, they are good live, but no one would ever go on about their live show. No one would ask them questions about their performance. The plus that we have is we'll still be doing something else live that no one else has done, and we did that with dance now it's time to move on.'

Last time I checked I was speaking English. Either Jack's trying to really make his point or, anyhow, Meat Beat like most superior noise terrorists, keep themselves challenged and know when to turn off from the path when the territory becomes too familiar. This occurred with their live extravaganza but also led to higher expectations from their audiences. 'They enjoyed it but because there was so much of an emphasis live they really expected a lot more. They expected something like big inflated pink pigs to float across the audience and for a group at our level it's impossible to do that sort of stuff. It costs so much money and at the end of the day we'd be cutting our own throats cause we wouldn't be promoting the product that was available. It's just a live show, but for what it was it worked.' It got us attention, he reasons.

But think how much safer to just do subtle variations on the same show. Resisting the temptation has always been easy for Meat Beat Manifesto as the band has always been about change. Musically we've always had different styles,

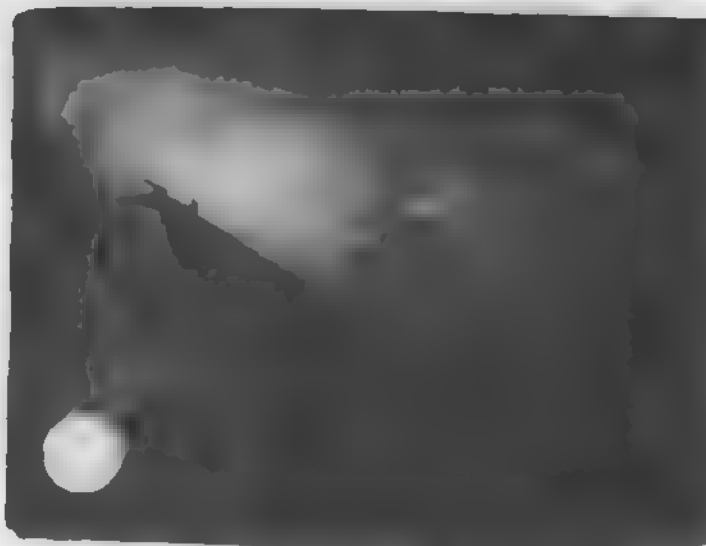


## FROM A SURREALIST

but it all got to the point where every live show that we did, people would be going 'why didn't you do 'Helter Skelter'? Why didn't you do 'Radio Babylon'? It's *about* having people in spiky costumes dancing primarily to a few songs. So the music that we actually did live never actually existed on record, we made it up to perform live to. So now we'll provide what we are here for.'

When the band first began performing live in London, they went onstage for a scant seven minutes, assaulting the audience with dancers, pornographic imagery and plenty of sound and fury, Jack describes. 'We did this seven minute show, with twenty people onstage, condensing an hour long show into seven minutes, it was an onslaught to the senses. Like our first album and single, it's in your face music, loud, aggressive, and live it worked to the same thing. But now we're doing things like 'Helter Skelter' and 'Radio Babylon' primarily dance music, which doesn't work if you use dancers in spiky costumes,' he jokes.

In earlier interviews the band used to claim they would never do long performances as they wanted to get the initial impact across in a hit and run style. But promoters weren't overjoyed over such short sets. Then along came those famous much talked about (we've already mentioned them enough, eh?) spiky costumes and the



especially on the first album. The whole idea to do that album and the way it came out was like a purge, personally for me anyway. It was like a catharsis of every musical influence which inspired me, all those elements of hip hop and funk, dub, reggae, electronic, what ever it was. So 1997 is really like our first album, with a more linear approach.

'At least now we're away from performance talk.' Is the linear approach more challenging through the control elements introduced than the more spontaneous way Meat Beat initially worked with *Storm the Studio*? Airing a vocal shrug Jack claims, 'It's just another facet. I get

bored really quickly with music. Rock and roll has been around for so long that it's good if people see something different. Not that there's anything wrong with rock and roll, or what ever that genre is that you want to call rock and roll, I think if everyone was the same it'd be a boring world.'

But that's the main problem with the people who loosely use that cliché term, for every inventive group that can take the age old guitar, bass, drums, voice and make it into magic, there's thirty groups still churning out freeze-dried soulless druck. Jack rightly states, 'I'm happy that we've done something different and that we still are going to do something different. I think it's a healthy

Photo by Rick Taylor



approach. Especially since we're getting views and points across in our music and if you want to label us a dance band, I think we're actually saying more than most, except maybe someone like Consolidated, or Public Enemy. But the way I approach it it's more like an abstract form of trying to put a view over. It makes you use your brain a bit more. Dance music is so brain-dead, and especially with the current climate in the world, people must be stupid to just go to a club and forget what's going on."

But then on the other side there's the plea that people need their entertainment to get away from it all. I'm waving the red flag and Jack retorts, "Well, they've got that, in bands like Bass-o-matic, they've got that with too many bands. So I think the music scene has to grow up a little bit, especially in the coming year."

Bands who say their music means absolutely nothing are obtuse to the point you want to make their life hell so their music can mean something. Don't tell me it doesn't mean anything, even if it's only about how you put your shoes on that morning. Jack reasons, "People in bands today are really irresponsible if they don't try and get some view over. I don't mean to say our view, I'm not forcing views down people's throat, it's just try to give it a more interesting perspective. The comparison would be what

we met up with them again in New York, then Texas. Because we work on similar lines in our music it just seemed inevitable that we were gonna link up together."

Consolidated's first album ducked under most people's notice when it was first released. This album is generating more interest. "It's the climate at the moment, cause there aren't many bands actually doing what they do. Public Enemy seem to talk about a

point of view from a black person's perspective, and that's only appealing to a particular area of people. Then again it's the same for Consolidated if they're talking about vegetarianism, which will only concern certain people. If they ever do that it's cause they feel that people are ignorant about it. They're not saying *this is what you've got to do* but *this is what it's like*. Then with what I do it's more like 'this is what it could be like: look, there's a fish riding a bicycle over there!'" he snickers.

"Just sort of presenting with the background that I'm from, I'm really influenced by that surrealism, pop art and those sort of things. I suppose it comes back in my lyrics."

Dali meets Warhol. Speaking of lyrics, since Meat Beat is about cerebral views didn't Jack ever get frustrated at the thought that those ever popular spiky costumes (another

Picasso did with *Guernica*: it's obviously a strong subject to him, and he presented it in such a way which the viewer would have to use their intelligence to get that view from it. That's what I try to do lyrically. Never really saying there's a definite point but really leaving it opened ended, just making you aware." That's one of the better comparisons I've

heard, being that *Guernica* is one of the most disturbing paintings to occupy canvas. Jack's in touch with his own work with that accurate summation of MBM's aural statements.

But don't think that Jack is totally into trashing bands without a message: as long as they have a certain original perspective, he can generously tolerate them. And a certain band without a message is one of his favorites. "I think it is good if some bands don't sing about anything and are just entertainment value. My favorite band is the Cocteau Twins, and they don't sing about anything but they're so good it doesn't matter! And if you want to listen to a message then go to Public Enemy or Consolidated."

Consolidated and Meat Beat compromise one of the summer's key hard-edged musical tours. Jack spent three weeks in San Francisco, Consolidated's home base, working on production with them for *Friendly Fascism*. "We met up with them for the very first time in San Francisco where we played with them, nearly two years ago. They

time it was a good thing. But we did assimilate the information at hand and decided that the next performances would be minimal visually," he announces with mock pretention. "And we've got a new single coming out and we'll be doing it live, for the first time ever," he laughs. "It will still be presented in an interesting way cause the music doesn't sound like anyone else. People talk about the visual side to the exclusion of the lyrics."

I'm as guilty as the rest. It gets so cloudy with the visuals coming across so vehemently that they had to mean as much as the lyrics! "I don't blame people for doing that. If people want to talk about the visuals then do it."

And then there was the episode where the band's album 99% was just about released on Wax Trax, to the point of advances being sent and advertising placed and Play It Again, Sam, Meat Beat's parent company, cut licensing with Wax Trax. The band ended up on Mute

(Continued on page 39)



# MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO



'Silver Cloud' is another sad, searchingly simple song while 'Another Door Closes' starts out slow, with a stand-out chorus and intricate melody arrangements for the lead and backup vocals. Of course it doesn't hurt to have killer percussion either! 'Ghosts of Summers Past' starts off pretty eerily, appearing to be deceptively simple but Robert Jones' lead vocals dismiss this notion. After many listens to Venus Bead's fine sounds I have to ask Robert about how the Venus Beads write their music. He answers, "I think what we basically agree on is that if a song can just sound good when someone is sitting there strumming on an acoustic

**-By LaShawn Kendrick**

I had the pleasure of meeting Robert Jones from Venus Beads at the Roadrunner office in New York one rainy day. Robert, who seemed like he was almost straight out of high school, said hello with a smile on his face while looking slightly nervous. These traits endeared him right away.

Venus Beads had been signed by Emergo records in London. The band members are Robert Jones, lead vocals and guitar; Anthony Price on guitar; Stephen Bolt on bass and Mark Hassall on drums. The band is from Stoke-On-Trent, England. They have been together for a couple of years and after struggling through life's inevitable roller coaster feel that they are finally on their way. When asked how the band formed, Robert answers, "It formed locally in Stoke-On-Trent from several other local bands with people that really wanted to carry on. We were all sort of at a loss. And we were all disillusioned from previous bands." The way that Robert described it in truth it was nothing short of desperation mixed with all of the elements of willingness and the drive to get ahead.

So what about the curious title of the band? "It's funny, but the title of the band," says Robert, "isn't significant. The first show we played, we didn't have a name, but a friend started listening and said, 'you can play tomorrow night, but I've got to know if you can do it.' Of course we all said 'yes.' So he said, 'so what's the name of the band?'" They came up with the name of the band in about five minutes. "We sort of looked around at each other and we thought we would just take the name Venus Beads as a name and then change it, but the name just stuck."

Another thing that will stick with the listening audience is their debut album *In-cision*. Upon listening I immediately decided for anyone who is into hardcore punk/pop, this is the album for you

Before *Incision* came their debut four song EP *Transfixed*. It contains a mix of hardcore-pop- raunchy songs that are worth a definite check-out. From the first song, 'Heaven & Back,' a semi-instrumental with powerful guitar lines and the capability to draw emotion from you whether you want to give it or not to the final track 'Cold Inferno' which leaves one wondering how does Robert Jones squeeze all those words into each line and make them sound so good, *Transfixed* is an EP you have to listen to very closely. The music and lyrics are definitely out of this

world. With each listen *Transfixed* got better and better, and even after the fourth time, I could stand a little more of this well-done EP. The vocals stand out proud and strong and the music is creative, highlighting each complicated moment of this EP.

*Incision*, produced by Ex-House of Love guitarist Terry Bickers, who also produced *Transfixed*, contains nine songs that have much of the debut EP's power but this album somehow has a different feel from *Transfixed*. The songs seem sadder and deeper, like someone trying to understand life and all of its emotional complications. Good luck.

The Venus Bead's use a lot of musical and lyrical imagery. imagery on this album 'Incendiary' is a fine instrumental track with a happening beat right from the beginning. This song is another example of how hardcore they can become I can handle it if you can. They change pace with 'Never Always Mine', opting for a slow, sad feeling which envelopes the listener with the lyrics fitting the mood, whereas on 'The Moon is Red' the guitar screams from the beginning, the band gliding like a well-oiled machine. I also had a chance to see their video for this song, and about 75% or more of the camera shots in the video are blurry takes that glide across the screen. It became a bit much as I would have liked to have seen more of the band in action since they are young and good-looking with a lot of energy and this song definitely has serious appeal.



guitar then the general rule that we seem to follow is that if it can stand up in those terms it can only get better once the members start adding things. Within reason, of course. If someone does something completely out of context with the song, Mark will be the one to kind of be the first one to say something."

For Venus Beads, the basic idea of their music is fairly simple. "There isn't really a message. Just feelings. It's not a preachy or political kind of thing. It's more of a personal thing." He continues, "I think the main thing is to evoke some sort of emotion. I think some of the songs are probably what people would find kind of depressing, but the songs that I like are the ones that make me feel sad. They make me feel sad and happy. I don't



know, but there are some songs from other artists that make you feel sad and happy, intensely sad but you get a sort of a weird euphoria. Hopefully that's what the Venus Beads can do." Robert tells me that since their formation the Venus Beads have had more opportunity to grow and expand as performers. "We started getting good press which was what we needed. It made getting gigs easier and then you could say, 'I got a good review last weekend.' People are just more liable to listen to you. It made it easier."

The Venus Beads hasn't had the chance to do too much traveling yet. They made a quick trip to Cologne, Germany for a show but only for one day, which didn't leave them much time for sight-seeing. "We haven't traveled much at all and until a month ago I hadn't been out of England. I've been to Wales but that's only about an hour away from my house," laughs Robert. Part of the reason that the Venus Beads feel that they haven't made it much bigger, sooner is explained by Robert. "Stoke-On-Trent is made up of five towns and there is no actual center. It's really unfocused. So for a band

# HEAVENLY

# BAUBLES



spokesman for the remaining members. Robert sits thoughtfully for a few moments when I ask him to describe himself, so we opt to go on to everyone else first.

Robert thinks for a moment, "There's Anthony... I think he's optimistic. Yea, he's definitely the most optimistic in the band. He's most likely to be the one to say, 'everything'll be alright.' You know, which is what

from Stoke-On-Trent, that makes it more difficult." He feels also that if there was an actual city center then everyone could probably meet at a central point. This would make it easier to gain notoriety and play with other bands on a larger scale.

In addition to the rigorous schedule of gigs, rehearsals, interviews and sleep, the band does somehow manage to entertain themselves. "At the moment we don't have many options. Everyone sort of stays put. But there are several places where the drink is cheap and the discos are pretty cheap."

I wanted to know more about everyone in the band. Since I couldn't meet with them personally unless I was planning on taking a trip to England, Robert has to be the

you really need when there are three other miserable people. And outside of the band, I don't think he'll be pushed around too much. Anthony won't take any shit off anybody, he'll probably fall out with them. I think Anthony is probably the one who keeps everyone in line really.

"Mark is more placid. Mark writes the songs, he writes the actual scores. He sits down with an acoustic guitar and I go away and learn it. Mark is sort of quiet and creative. But really scruffy. His room is really trashed. I don't think he can look after himself; he needs mothering.

"Steve is really quiet and reserved. I think he's a bit wasted being in a band because at

(Continued on page 43)

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TEXT BY MARCI COHEN

PHOTOS BY MICHELE TAYLOR

Music as marriage. Musicians as newlyweds as they pepper their conversation with compliments for one another. You are cordially invited to the wedding of Jack Frost. One name, two people, one voice. Jack Frost is the band, collaboration, project, all of the above, of Grant McLennan and Steve Kilbey, the former a former Go-Between, the latter of the Church. Ask them questions and they take turns responding. Neither has all the answers; neither merely occupies spaces. In speech, each voice is distinctive; in song, they are indistinguishable to the extent that Grant thinks he is hearing his own voice when Steve sings on their record. Together they have created an utterly listenable album.

Yes, it could invite uninformed record store sales clerks to file it under F. They've already read reviews of the eponymous Arista debut that proclaim, "This guy Jack really has something going." The album cover itself offers no illumination. Steve and Grant's faces appear only on the CD booklet tucked inside the package. Their names are not revealed until that inner sleeve is unfolded. The pair all but stand in the background and let Jack take over. "It took on a life of its own. It deserted us. It controlled us. We didn't have anything to do with it. We just went along. We just got on the ferris wheel and just kept on going round," characterizes Grant, too humble to take credit for their own work. He later reiterates the concept of *Jack Frost* the recording as a separate lifeform. "The record's already grown beyond how it started. It just started as a lark, as a gamble. And at the moment, it's racing down the street ahead of us. We're trying to catch up... It's a proud, defiant little critter. It's running around saying, 'Listen to me. Listen to me.'"

Although both Frost members hail from Down Under, the Australians actually met in New York, Up Over as it were. Steve renders a vaguely implausible tale about his hearing wonderful, slightly familiar music coming from a window while walking the streets of New York, shimmying up a drainpipe towards its source and discovering Grant inside. Grant mentioned wanting



# JACK FROST

to work with Steve then, but it took some time before they could finally do so because of other commitments. But the Go-Betweens called it quits early in 1990. The Church released the wonderful *Gold Afternoon Fix* shortly thereafter, but toured for only two months, freeing Steve. That winter (a.k.a. summer in this hemisphere), they popped into the studio during a two-week hiatus from their other musical activities.

Grant explains that they didn't even have a rough idea of their game plan when they came together. "We had about three or four songs which we'd written over two days. And then we went in the

studio and sort of got those out of the way. And then every day we'd come into the studio not knowing what we were going to do and start doing something new. And at the end of the day, we had a song. And that was pretty much the work process. It was a really intense, high-octane time. We equipped ourselves very well."

The hurried pace was not entirely self-imposed, he notes. "The studio that we recorded at was going out of business. And people were taking things out of the studio every day. So we had to use the reverb unit before they took it away. To keep the studio open, we had to take the studio for two weeks, so it was a two week album. If we had to keep the studio open for a week, we would have done an album in a week."

Even with limited time and minimal pre-planning, they had no problem rounding up a string section and other addition musicians. "They were banging down the door to get in and play with us," jokes Grant. "They were fawning sycophants that had learned to play their instruments in the Australia Symphony Orchestra and they were tired of Mozart and Beethoven and wanted to get their teeth into some real music. They wanted to get their teeth into a bit of Kilbey."

Other bands may brag about how fast they blitz through recording, mistaking the raw for the haphazard. But this quick album holds the rare distinction of sounding complete, not on the verge of unraveling. "I think that's down to the engineering, and the production was very well done," praises Grant. Part of the credit goes to Pryce Surplice, an engineer friend of Steve's who worked behind the boards as well as playing drums and assorted electronic equipment on the album. "The record sounds great, not dodgy or trashy," says Grant before adding a disclaimer. "Oh, it is on one song when we wanted it like that." He refers most likely to 'Didn't Know Where I Was,' a scrappy romp that rhymes Wisconsin and Charles Bronson. It is unlike anything else on the album, a trait shared by the majority of the tracks. Such diversity was not a preset goal. "It's like every song just fell out of our heads by accident and they were all different



to each other. And we looked upon that and it pleased us," says Steve. With the birth of Jack Frost, they freed themselves of the constraining shackles of all previous work. "You're creating expectations rather than living up to them," Steve summarizes. "Jack Frost could be anything. Jack Frost could be folky or could be nasty or could be melancholy. It could be happy."

And *Jack Frost* is all of these and then some, full of contrasts while still sounding like a unified body of work. It bridges the wistful spoken-word 'Trapeze Boy' with the emotive love song 'Providence.' Steve terms the opening and closing tracks, 'Every Hour God Sends' and 'Everything Takes Forever' as "...very philosophical. Sometimes you take the good with the bad. Easy come, easy go. What goes around comes around." 'Thought That I Was Over You' perfectly captures ambivalence towards an ex. *Jack Frost* is a set of cultured pearls, each song a bead exquisite on its own, but the songwriting strings them together so that the beauty can be appreciated as a whole.

Steve indicates that his method on songwriting varies with each collaborator. "You've got to change your approach. Writing with Grant is different to writing with the Church, and that's different to writing on your own. If you want to write a song with other people, you've got to give and take a bit." To Steve, that need for an altered approach provides part of the appeal of working with others. He and Grant agree that they are unusually attuned to one another and the synergy between them continues.

While Jack Frost are still in the throes of their honeymoon stage, they acknowledge that long-term band monogamy does not exist. Between the Go-Betweens and the Church, the two have experienced every form of "infidelity": solo and side projects, turnover and a break-up. Steve generalizes such changes as inevitable for any group. The maximum life span of any single configuration? "Um, a weekend?" he suggests. "I think unless people do things outside, that it won't last. And I think even if they do things outside, there aren't many bands that make five years. And there's very few that make ten. And over that, it's all lawyers and recording on different days and only speaking by fax and stuff like that."

Both personality and creativity come into play. "You spend a lot of time with the same bunch of people, everybody knows everything about everybody else, so there's no real conversation. Everybody knows everybody's view on everything. So there's no real conflict there. The only thing that you really—you're bickering over who got the best seat on the aeroplane and why did he get the better hotel room than me. It gets down to all that sort of stuff. And then if you come out the other side of that, which is what the Church did, we went through all that and came out the other side. You might last a bit longer. But that gets most of them."

"And also the thing these days," Steve continues, "there's a lot of pressure. With the advent of the porta-studio, suddenly everybody became a songwriter. Everybody became a producer. And so you've

got everyone in the bands writing their own songs and producing it and knowing how they want it to sound. And when the album time comes around, everyone wants to get five of their songs on a record. And when that doesn't happen, people get very disgruntled. And all their friends are saying, 'Your songs are better than his. Why don't you get your songs on the album?' And the whole thing becomes ugly. I think that's what's happening to a lot of bands now."

While Steve and Grant may avoid such ego-induced pitfalls with their numerous projects, they don't leave themselves much down time. Grant has been producing other bands since the demise of the Go-Betweens, with plans to do more. No sooner than they wrapped up with Jack Frost, he went to work on his solo debut. While promoting the American release *Jack Frost*, he was already scheduling similar efforts for his own album. As for Steve, he enjoys being on stage although he doesn't care for the actual touring process, so he embarked on an informal ("It was very informal. It was informal to the point of collapse.") solo tour last fall. "The solo tour was really just a joke, just a chance to go around America and see some people." After this round of publicity, he was headed back to work on the next Church album.

# THE Perfect MARRIAGE



They don't rule out the possibility of touring. "If it works and we've got time, we'd love to do it. We'd love to take the Frost out on the road and say, 'Hello, Cleveland,'" says Grant. They played a few acoustic shows in the U.S. in conjunction with doing interviews here. At New York's Wetlands, they took to the stage looking as if they had just wandered in from the street, guitars in hands. In concert, their singing voices are so similar that checking for moving lips is the easiest way to tell them apart. Stripped down from all its production values to just two acoustic guitars, 'Every Hour God Sends,' took on a new light but still came across effectively. They added timely, humorous couplets to 'Everything Takes Forever,' obviously having fun with the piece.

After their set, the record business people offered nuptial congratulations to the happy couple and posed them for contrived photographs with the all "relatives." Quickly, the factions split off. The folks from Beggars Banquet, the Go-Between's home label, hovered over Grant while the Arista contingent attended to Church member Steve. No ushers needed to announced, "Bride's family on the left; groom's on the right." The division was quite implicit. But neither Steve nor Grant had white lace and veils in mind for their portraits when putting the album together. They were thinking of outlaws, not in-laws. "We were actually posing for the Australian government. It

was a 'Wanted' poster. It was going to be put up on walls across Australia. 'Wanted for crimes against music,'" jests Steve about the shot of them on the CD sleeve. "We were trying to sort of look like the James Gang. Not Joe Walsh's old band, the original James Gang."

Call it marital bliss. They talk brightly tracks they've already recorded for the next *Jack Frost* album and are blocking out their time to work on it. "We're up on the roof at the moment, screaming at the world. It's a great feeling," declares Grant. **B**



# PIGFACE



The Pigface traveling road show: from left, Matt Schultz, Chris Connolly, Bill Rieflin, Martin Atkins

**-By Sandra A. Garcia**

Some people amaze me. During Pigface's soundcheck Ogre comes up and introduces himself, murmuring, "You might not remember me from backstage last year..." I gape at him. Not remember Ogre? What a modest guy. So how's it going in the land of Pig? "I'm having a lot of fun. This is really a lot of fun!" Ogre gives a grin to support his words until a fierce hacking cough racks his chest, his grin transforming to grimace, "If only I could get rid of this chest cold!"

That same cold strain worked its way through everyone I knew in the early summer. It comes from working one's self too hard! Ogre in turn gives a quirked smile and wryly claims he works too hard at the bad side of things. He certainly doesn't work too hard at threatening ignorant security guards who minutes before attempted to block his way into the very club where he's to perform. People waiting outside tell the guards, "But he's Ogre, man!" The guards refrain from getting too excited and mull over what they should do with this big dude who's merely giving them a placid stare. Is he dangerous? Is he violent? Finally Bill Rieflin rescues the unruffled Ogre much to the relief of the guards. I would have loved to have seen Ogre give just one little snarl for comedy's sake but he's too polite.

Ogre might not work hard in his own self-interests but he is working hard at an excellent experience... namely the amazing Pigface, a project that he's busy lending his

unique vocal talents for a few songs and a bit of a stunning tour. Pigface. There's a myriad of hard work involved in this bastard child created out of an alternative who's who of talent. If I dare to call it a... ahem... supergroup the mighty men of Pig will hate that description. Let's forget that word completely, shall we? It brings to mind so much musical misery.

Let's also forget the long lengthy historical rehashes. This monster project has two ringleaders with track records as long as a Grateful Dead concert, maaaaan! Martin Atkins is our boisterous, belligerent drummer boy, veteran of many a band, the entrepreneurial soul behind the Invisible empire, while Bill Rieflin goes about his business with a lower-keyed approach, confident while possessing more talent on more instruments than an entire band. There's some intense interrogation to be done here. Said tremendously talented musicians got together after the last Ministry tour and shanghaied a mess 'o equally talented musicians into the studio and out oozed *Gub*. "This year was a very busy year for me. I got off the Ministry tour, and went straight into the Pigface thing, but that was only ten or eleven days then that was finished," supplies Bill. Only ten or eleven days to make history. Main Pigface vocal man/ poet/ remixer Chris Connolly relates, "Pigface was Martin Atkins saying, 'Look, we have eight talented people, let's write some new songs.' They started writing on the tour at





ns, Ogre (hanging), Raven, William Tucker

ticularly if you're listening to music that isn't like that. It actually took me awhile to really like the record," he admits. "If you were to listen to the record for about a month you would come to really like it a lot. It will make sense to you after a while."

Don't make the mistake of claiming you think Pigface live clicks more than *Gub* the record. It leads to interview trouble.

Chris is more direct on the matter, exclaiming in his rich tones, "The Pigface album is demented. It's really cool. It's a great album. Steve Albini... oh, I love him. He's great! He has one of the best senses of humor I've ever seen in a man. He's so witty. I'd really like to work with Steve in the future cause we get on real well. And he's a brilliant producer. He's very different from anything I've done before. He goes for a real dry true sound. He has all these microphones, very old good microphones, and while recording drums and guitar he just got a really warm sound. And I've never heard anyone record music quite that way. It fit the album perfectly. The album has its own sound to it."

Martin agrees with both opinions. "The record has more of a range of diversity than the live show. Pigface has actually become a band with a sound. Which is somewhat necessary in order to pull off a show. But..."

Back to Bill. "It's also a natural event. You stick a bunch of people together and start playing and hopefully a sound will emerge from that without trying to sound any particular way. The sound has been born."

Wimbledon on a bus. Volley to Martin: "Also the idea originally was that there'd be about nine people in the band but there would be a core of five, and there would be like six people onstage at a time and it would just keep changing that way. But what happens is that Ogre says 'well, I'm really enjoy-

exactly the differences in our personal characters. If you were just to hang out for a day without knowing us you would know who played how. As well, we make up for each other's lacks. I play more precisely, and he has a lot more power than I do. So by playing together we're evening each other out. Martin plays so fuckin' loud that I have to do *something* to be heard over him onstage! We're playing more tightly together."

"My playing style is very economical. I'm not prone to histrionics. A lot of people think I look really bored while I'm playing. But I'm not bored at all. There's just no need for it. I'm a reductionist," Bill laughs at his own self-description.

Well, Bill is in no way boring. I'll beat up anyone ignorant enough to hold that opinion. But that very melding of styles helps to fuel Pigface onstage as even at its wildest, when the manic energy teeters on the edge, their precision keeps it from losing all control and becoming a ghastly musical mess. A true balancing act on a pollen mote while floating through sound.

Bill reasons, "It shows that everybody is putting some effort into it. We're there to play a really great show. It's structured enough that we can get away with it. We're happy to try it and hopefully the audience will go along with it. Hopefully they won't notice cause it will be so good," he mockingly grins.

The idea to have different people join in from each city also changes every show's character. The Pigface ideal is to have diverse people participating in Pigface the idea. And you don't have to be a name to be in on this traveling art show, so step right up. Trent Reznor joins for New York, Pittsburgh and others, En Esch comes on board in Tren-

# EVOLUTION

soundchecks till they said 'fuck it' and went into the studio. Me and Martin remixed the twelve inch in a few hours. But the album itself was recorded and mixed in about two weeks. We couldn't afford any more time!" he laughs. "Pigface is really fuckin' great. The band is just great. And I wanna do another album real soon. I wanna do another one with new people soon."

So that's the Pigface saga. Now they're busy creating a new chunk of history, with live performances the like never seen before. Not so much for their over the top antics or theatrics: Pigface doesn't need props or scenery. They've got a better secret weapon: a true knowledge that nothing is wrong in their world so why not try it at least once? As long as it doesn't kill you in the trying...

"The idea was to challenge ourselves. And really, it didn't matter whether anybody was interested in the final product, the end result. One of the things..." The back to blonde Martin supplies some of his thoughts, pausing as Bill cuts in, "And the process was really important. I think it is, in certain aspects, a difficult record to listen to. Par-

ing myself' and we're like 'okay, then pick up a guitar' and we end up being onstage for most of the set. And that changes it right away. And I think a series of shows will be more like the album than one show. Each track on the album captures a certain day, or a friend of mine, or a theme, and each show we're in a different mindset."

"But each show is the same way in that it captures the feeling of a given day," Bill reinforces. "The energy level of that day, or the repercussions of the day," he laughs. "But each show is decidedly different, they each have their own character."

And not only are there the differences in the shows, but what about the sheer physical mass of talent involved in the initial recording? Paul Barker, Trent Reznor, David Yow, Matt Schultz, Ogre, Chris Connelly, En Esch, William Tucker... while not everybody is making it to all the dates, what a lineup. Just the two masterful men behind the kits are worth the price of admission. Bill describes, "The differences in the way we play are

ton, there is talk of a few Chili Peppers and even Rat Scabies in Los Angeles... "In San Antonio we had five guys onstage playing oil drums at the end and that was really cool. Because if the basic concept is at the end of the night the more songs that are played the more people should be onstage... New York was *insane*," Martin wisely decides.

There were at least fourteen live bodies on stage that I could count by the end of the night. It was astounding. "Yeah! But if we tried to do that tonight it would become the same thing. And if we did that every day it would be boring," is Martin's strong opinion. Most of Martin's opinions are strong. "In Atlanta we all sat around and Chris read to us. It so happened that we were all onstage and he was also reading to an audience but we were part of the audience. So every day has been different like that. And hopefully it will remain so."

Bill jokes that his interviewing style is



much like his drumming, he coming in for refining notes. "And when those events are at their best, they're not planned out. That Chris thing, he was just reading and we all decided not to play. It just happened. We're finding that a lot of things are just happening. And the reason for that is that we're putting ourselves in a situation, into a position where all these things can happen."

a challenging idea that exploded into a band. There had to be horrendous doubts about the feasibility of the project actually working as well as it seems to be on the road. Bill claims, "Last year our goals were a little different. Our aim was to make an album. During the making of it, and even when it was finished there was still a buzz going on, and it was mentioned more casually than anything that it would be nice to take this on the road. And it turned into this. It turned into an actual band, whereas before it was at least an interesting idea, but more and more it's become a band."

The other beauty of Pigface is the fact there's no competition, no egotism, there's no one person desperately struggling for control in the musical arena, although as far as sound checks go do not mess with Martin. He probably demoralized more than one club sound person across this great land. "The fact that we all have worked together, we're all friendly, we all know all the crap about our personal lives," Bill laughs, "we know what it's like to be in a band, and there's no mystique

is my day job," he deadpans.

Well, Martin bailed out of that day job. Now Martin's day job is touring with Nine Inch Nails on the Lollapalooza tour, and I'd like to see Perry try to push NIN out of their proper place with Martin on board. Even once away from Pigface the mutations continue to link these innovative musicians together. But what sours Martin is the typical band structure as usual, something he avoids with Pigface. "I think the far reaching effects of Pigface, it has caused all of us to look and question and re-evaluate everything that we're doing. And I think that's healthy. Do whatever you want to do," Martin shrugs. And that's a perfect description of the ongoing Pigface ethic.

Bill leans in to comment, "You know the one really nice thing about Pigface, among the many I think the minute that any pretension is introduced into the group it's immediately clear. It's seen for what it is. There's just no bullshit. It's really easy, really down to earth, and the minute there's any crap it's like, 'oh well, that is a bunch of crap.' And then it's like, 'oh well, I'm sorry,' as he contritely ducks his head. The fact that Pigface isn't working within the constraints of major label bullshit lends more exhilaration to the project. "We don't need this financial

ly, which is nice. It's not essential, so it gives us the opportunity to stretch our legs," agrees Bill.

Pigface is a mecca for that all important state of artistic being. Martin spouts out, "We have the luxury of total artistic control over what we do, but it's something that we've all worked for, it's not just



"We go relaxed enough," observes Martin.

Exactly. Bill lobs, "There's no pressure at all to put on a show. We all know that we can get up there and play music. I mean all we have to do is go there, the music takes care of itself. That's all illustrated by the fact that we only had five days of rehearsal, which when distilled into real time comes to only about six hours total."

"Six? Maybe six," Martin goes for the forehead smash with a throw. "When we were rehearsing, we'd spend an hour in the rehearsal room and two or three hours around the kitchen table. Cause at Invisible there's a big warehouse space with offices, rehearsal space and living space, and

"And an animal shelter," interjects Bill proudly.

"And an animal shelter. And in many ways sitting around the kitchen table eating pizza talking about what we were thinking about was more of a rehearsal for this than a rehearsal. Because all we did in the rehearsals was get an idea then change it. So it was the more you'd rehearse the more the song would change anyway so we decided that we knew what we were doing and then rehearsals became more in the way of pre-production, shows, hotels, wherever. Taking care of those details so that they didn't disturb our mindset," describes Martin.

The beauty of the Pigface is that it began as



about it really were. All we had to do is get together and play music and that's the easy part."

We were talking to Trent last night, he came out to Pittsburgh and we said, 'hang out with us for a few days.' Cause it's so different, and it's therapy almost. It's really given me a burst of enthusiasm again. Old friends have said, 'wow, it's really nice to see you having a good time,' sighs Martin. His enthusiasm for music was definitely dampened before embarking into Pigface. "I've described Killing Joke at this point as my day job. That's the way I feel. Raven and myself go straight to Europe after this to do a Killing Joke festival tour and I don't wanna go! I mean Pigface is a lotta work but... Killing Joke





something that we just stumbled upon. We've all worked hard in different ways. And now we have this total freedom to express ourselves, which is actually quite a frightening thing. When there aren't any problems, I mean musically, it's *frightening!*" laughs Martin.

"What do you *do?*" exclaims Bill in mock fright.

"There was a moment in the studio where we surmounted all the logistical problems of getting everyone together, had Steve Albini in the studio, had worked out a deal with Chicago Tracks recording studio, and we were so wrapped up in those problems then we sat down and Steve Albini goes, 'Ok, we're rolling,' and I looked at Bill and went, 'oh FUCK!'" Martin laughs.

"Once in the studio we realized that we were in the studio, spending money and we

didn't know *what* the fuck we were up to!" agrees an equally laughing Bill, pulling a serious face to conclude, "It was really a *frightening* day."

"Really! What the *hell* are we *doing?*" despairs Martin.

"The thing that day that really made me feel good was when William Tucker came in and put some guitar down on what was to become 'Little Sister,' and all the sudden it was like ohhhhh. it kind of made sense," Bill remembers with satisfaction.

"I had a riff that fit perfectly with what they had just put down and I had the riff in my head and I just did that, and it turned into the song," contributes William from his relaxed sprawl in the bus' galley area.

Spontaneity rules at every level. "We walked into the studio with a sheet of paper with about seven different very loose ideas to try. We really didn't know. We had been rehearsing during the Ministry tour during soundcheck. Martin and I would be playing, and it was really from that point that it all blossomed," explains Bill.

"I think those Ministry soundchecks were an ideal opportunity for us to work on ideas and take them into the studio. That's one reason there's a difference between what we do live and the studio. The studio captured the very first, the embryo of ideas, where just the nature of performing the songs and working within the framework of a theme, it refines the elements that we laid down for the album. The live show is more refined than the album," describes Martin.

"Another element of the Pigface thing is that working in Ministry, everything is really refined. Everybody knew what they were doing at all times. And somewhat reactionary to that, Martin and I wanted to make a record that was really raw. You don't find a lot of that these days, particularly among the people that we associate with. And we wanted to do something uncooked, al-

Raven proudly displays his newfound toy in Martin's face. It's a vicious looking knife arrangement that slips over the knuckles with shiny blades spouting all over the place. Bill leans in for a better view, exclaiming, "Can I wear that when I drum?" as he makes appropriate shredding noises.

Raven grins, "It's from the Ninja Shop on the corner." The lure of Chinatown is inescapable. Martin tests it out, applying pressure with his thumb, pushing harder when no blood squirts out. "It's not really sharp though. It's very nicely made."

Bill flatly states, "You will never get that across the border," as Raven shoots him a 'yes I will' look, wandering off with his prize. The rest of the boys should remember he has that in case their jolly spirit of camaraderie wears thin. he may sharpen it out of boredom. Just don't mess with Raven's bunk.

Speaking of things that slice and dice, Pigface has even run into a dispute with another label over the rights to a certain vocalist: Martin directed an interesting remark during Pigface's New York City show to the label involved. "I think about my experiences with Warner Brothers, Celluloid, Virgin, Elektra, and that reminds me why Lelia and I have this record label. The ultimate result of the involvement, Trent's track 'Suck,' which I think is a really powerful track, isn't on the remixing EP, which I thought it should have been."

"I really have a problem with that, especially in the music," as the word business forms on his lips, he quickly ridding his tongue of that word, "...field, when the end result of that insanity is people's music, their goals, and their lives get trampled upon. In music, there's such a moral obligation to be straight ahead."

Martin finally takes a breath, muttering about people burning in the fires of hell, adding, "Along with Mr. Lydon." Steve Silver, tour manager to the stars, grins, "Actually my dream is that Lydon owns a club and I get to settle up with him." His ensuing enthusiastic laugh is a bit on the menacing side.

This dangerous enthusiasm is turned towards healthier pursuits when choosing songs from the various member's works. Martin points out, "It's 'wow, let's do that!' Just sitting around listening to the last Skinny Puppy with Ogre and going 'Wow, can we do that? Let's have a go!' and then running into the rehearsal room, 'Alllllright!'" And Chris's solo stuff is so cool I'd like to do more.

And Pigface is such that if we wanted to do an entire set of Chris' material one night, then that's as much of a Pigface show as any other. As the tour diversifies we'll do more."

So what's next for this whole concept? "We're out to metamorphose," deadpans Martin with a smirk. And what a lovely

though not half-baked. Bill puns with full intent, Martin giving a loud rude, "HA-HA-ha," in acknowledgement, disgustedly shaking his head.

"Raw, but sort of half-cooked," interjects Raven mockingly upon entering the bus. Martin suddenly blurts out, "Jesus Christ!" as

Photo by Kim Salerno



butterfly he'll make.

"We're out to continue. It's constantly evolving, the stage show is constantly evolving, that record was one thing that represented a certain idea at a certain time. What will happen next will be completely different," explains Bill, who has been relaxing on the sidelines while Martin racks up a few aces.

"We talked about taking the album a step further, which will be to isolate each person's contribution to the project and maybe put out a box of seven inch singles. Each of us could be free to do what ever we wanted with who ever we wanted. Because this is—in the supposed tradition of P.U., this is supposed to be an unband and un tour, and we end up stumbling onto one of the most powerful bands that I've ever been a part of. And that surprises me, although it doesn't," confesses Martin.

"Already in the history of Pigface we are at a point we didn't guess at when we first started," muses Bill. "So I can suppose when it comes time to do another record we'll be doing something that maybe we aren't thinking about right now."

"Well, I should hope so!" exclaims Martin dismissively. "Part of the idea of Pigface that will continue is that we will surprise ourselves while we're doing it."

You'll only disappoint yourselves if you don't surprise yourselves. But there has to be an established system of checks and balances somewhere along the way. Someone has to call time out if it gets out of hand. "Yeah, if we're making shitty music we will," defends Bill with pointed sarcasm.

"What happens is if you deliberately set out to be really wild, for instance, I set out to do a really mutant, spastic drum beat and Bill will do some horrible mutated time signature drumbeat and when you put them both together it's straight 4/4 beat rock and roll. If you keep making a series of left turns you end up where you started! And that's weird and surprising," shrugs Martin.

Something that catches the ear through its strangeness is the weird gadget Matt Schultz ahhh, plays? Pilots? Prods? Bill helpfully supplies, "The ATG. The anti-tank guitar, or the annoying toy guitar, depending on who you speak to. It was created, built, designed and performed on by Matt Schultz. It's his own deal. It's a terrific instrument. Matt's a great guy, he's something else. Martin was thinking it's just a block of wood, so Martin said 'Hey, why don't you paint that,' and Matt turns around to respond, 'Why don't you play your drums upside down?' 'Oh, ok, like I get the point!' Matt adds a really good dimension to the show, a really good dementia," he grins. Matt's atg is highlighted on the track from *Gub* entitled 'Cylinder Head World.' You know the one, its vibrations are like no other.

Matt's creativity fits in with the proceedings. "We will keep the idea that in Pigface anyone who appreciates can do what they wish. We hope that that person is sensitive to the needs of the music so that it will be cohesive. If the person is a singer, and they

want not to sing, they can try something else," outlines Bill. "We have the flexibility, to do something or not do something. And even not doing something is part of it. Which is another reason in Atlanta when Chris was reading his story we were onstage in a way we were part of the performance," claims Bill, beginning to laugh as Chris interrupts his dinner to declare "That makes us sound

down," agrees William. Make sure it's wood alcohol.

"And at the end of the show the chair will stage dive," Bill enthuses.

"I think we should do it," Martin declares with a sly grin. "We should do it in New York. It has to be in a major market. Just like a banner that unfurls down at the end 'What is Art?'"

"Pigface asks the question, 'What IS ART? What is life!'" as Bill affects his best newscaster's voice.

"Hey, you're not supposed to mention the 'A' word!" protests William.

"But most of all, how much money are we making?" cries Bill.

And are the members of Pigface really a bunch of psychotic performance artists? Or a bunch of guys out for a wild and crazy time on the road? The question remains unanswered. But since we're dealing with the silly, time out for a query: where did those bagpipers come from at the New York show?

Chris instantly declares, "It was Martin's idea, don't look at me!" His Scottish heritage must be offended!

"I suggested flamenco," defends Martin. "Which going back to what we were talking about before, we just wanted to see men in skirts."

Loud, jeering protests go up at this announcement, William deadpanning, "No, you wanted to see men in skirts, darling!"

"We asked Iggy Pop to come out in New York, for once in his life to be onstage with a decent band, and I thought 'well, all this alternative superheroes, it's getting a bit old already.' I mean who's the superhero tonight?" mocks Martin.

Bill excitedly cuts in, "But we did have an actual superhero in New York! Fucking Meat from Gwar!"

Pentality points! Martin shoots him a baleful look, continuing, "But I thought flamenco, how wild, but we were listening to the *Flowers of Romance* CD, and half way through there's all these flamenco hand-claps. So bagpipes. And they were great. It was just a blast for us. Instead of all the usual nail chewing bullshit that goes on before say, a Killing Joke performance, there we were in the dressing room relaxed, drinking beer, listening to bagpipes. We were in the dressing room expecting the music police to come in going, 'Alright, that's enough, get back to work!' This whole idea is just too much fun and there's a van outside waiting for you' to take me back to Killing Joke," he groans.

"We've all done plenty of tours that weren't fun. We're trying to enjoy music again," simplifies Bill.

But Martin isn't as thrilled with some of the logistics of the road. He exclaims, "People are like 'oh wow, musicians on tour, oh wow, fucking anarchy!'" His hard tone says bullshit in volumes to that asinine notion. "This is the hardest fucking job I've ever done. It's like working a night shift. And especially when you just regurgitate song after song every night. That's hard."

To each his own. But the way Pigface works causes the boys less mental stress. "I think where our experience came in is that we were intelligent enough and had enough



like we can get away with anything. 'In the name of art I decided to stay in bed this morning,'" he laughs.

"That's why that chair, on the stage, that's as much of a Pigface show as us being there with our equipment. I don't see what the problem is," Martin exclaims.

This marks the official loss of any quasi-professional stance they've been affecting. They have been a mite serious, but this referee gives up. "Tonight we're just going to get onstage and play cards," laughs Bill.

"I wonder if we should book some bogus gigs and just have somebody put a chair onstage and say 'Pigface performance,'" grins Martin.

"Oh, that would go down real well," laughs Chris.

"And we'll have a translator. The chair has just finished performing 'Weightless.' The chair will now take a fifteen minute intermission." Bill likes this idea, but William Tucker has some sympathy for the masses. "Then you'll just have a sea of anorexic, depressed people!"

"Well, we'll charge them 50 cents to get in so they won't be too depressed," Bill graciously reasons.

"Oh yeah, special bargain matinee with Pigface. That's good. And at the end we'll take the chair backstage and give it a rub-

foresight that we set this up and let people know what we were doing before we did it. Let people know that in Pigface there is no such thing as a mistake, we are going to do whatever we want, and we set the parameters before we got on the bus."

And for those of us who want more of this addicting fun? The entire tour's being carefully documented. And Martin promises, "The live CD will be very different from the video, and the way I feel at the moment the live CD could be 14 different versions of Bushmaster. Just to be a bastard to illustrate just *how* different *every* show was."

And we have every belief that Martin can be a proper bastard, in all the right ways. Don't get between this determined man and his love of music. The adventure continues.

After the perils of the soundcheck which barely avoided a pissed-off Martin walking out due to his admirable perfectionist tendencies towards Pigface's sound, it's time for that Bill Rieflin interrogation. Bill travels far from these onstage lunatic fringe matches, but he seldom discusses his pursuits other than as the skin smashing hero of the Blackouts, Revolting Cocks, Ministry and Pigface. His classically styled piano playing, as demonstrated on Chris Connelly's album *Whiplash Boychild*, is superb. He describes, "I did do one piece in California that was used for an opening at a gallery in Los Angeles, a painter named Kevin Joy. He turned up in the *Re-Search* tattooing issue. He's got some miraculous work on his back."

The only problem with Bill pursuing his own work is every time he gets home he needs to relax! When he finally readies to work on his own pursuits there's yet another phone call about another irresistible project. After Pigface there will be rehearsals for... the Ministry tour. "It's one of those world things. Japan, Europe, Australia... to tour and to go to places where I've never been excites me," he smiles. Bill has been on his share of fun tours: recently he got his first European tour. "Al gave me a call and asked if I wanted to do a Revolting Cocks tour..." as he grins. "It was to be in Europe, so I said 'of course!' I've never played in Europe and I thought that would be a great opportunity. And I'll tell you, it was the best tour I've been on. Absolutely. Believe it or not, it was really low key," he grins. "Nobody was thrown in jail, nobody was thrown out of a building."

The British press prepared like the entire country was going to be overrun by this huge band of destructive perverts. Even some government officials wanted to keep the band out.

Bill grins, "Well, that may or may not be the case...the tour was excellent."

After that Bill whisked home, then back to Chicago for rehearsals for the Ministry album then to the recording of the album. After five weeks of that it was back to Pigface. For a man who wasn't going to work on the latest Ministry album, he sure spent a lot of time in that Wisconsin studio having,

as he claims, some great fun. A blast, in fact!

But the Cocks and Ministry are finally facing new reaction factors. This has to stimulate Bill's adrenalin. "That's true. We do sort of have this built in fan-o-meter," he chuckles. "We can go to certain places and know that this amount of people are going to show up, these people are always going to be there, and they're always going to love the music. To that extent there's not a great challenge. But to go somewhere and to find the unexpected is fun."

There's something fascinating about the concept of a Japanese audience reacting to Ministry. Japanese audiences, not to be cliché, are very polite, even when smashed together. The sold out audience at Sakamoto's NYC show was a joy to be in, even crammed shoulder to shoulder.

Bill nods, claiming, "I can understand that cause for me, when I listen to music I don't do anything except listen to it. Sometimes I'll stand up when I listen to music. When I go to a concert, which I do infrequently, I'll always stand to the back. I don't dance, I

tening to the music. The performance varied so radically from their fixed concept of these musicians that they concentrated instead of mindlessly hurling themselves.

Bill gives a laugh, claiming, "There's definitely something to be said for hurling oneself. There's a really wild energy. I've thrown myself in to a few mosh pits here and there, old man that I am, and it's a completely different vibe. It's not quite music for listening to but it's not quite music for sports," he laughs.

But is Bill truly satisfied with being so busy that he can't pursue his own works? "I was talking to Chris about this and hopefully this year I'll be able to set up a situation where I can do some work. There are people all over that I'd like to work with. And I've been writing, I've been writing pieces for Chris on piano that are unlike anything I've been writing. The harmonies are very weird," as he rises, going to his bag to fetch a tape. "And if you'd like I could play you some."

Sometimes the most special things happen at the most unexpected times. In the midst of Pigface mayhem I'm treated to a taste of Bill's solo works. What a privilege. And it fits right into the "expect anything" Pigface ethic.

As much as Bill seems to be the reserved, polite member of the crowd, this doesn't bother him. "I have a function, I have a role within the band. It's an important one, but it's not high profile. That's perfectly fine with me. I am happy with the way I work with the bands. I like what I do, and I do it well, and it makes it all work. And that's fine. And I don't get harassed after the shows. Everyone else does but not me. I enjoy leaving the clubs after the show." He also enjoys wandering the clubs before the shows. The undercover drummer checking out the lay of the club.

People even mistake Bill for the tour manager. That was our faux pas upon our first meeting. There's the strong indication that someone is a stabilizing force behind groups like Pigface or Ministry. Someone has to keep their detachment, and Bill's our man with one foot on the ground. With his background of piano training, guitar lessons with Robert Fripp, and his precise percussion, it would seem Bill's the West coast renaissance man of the Chicago mafia. Further proof of Bill's diversity turns up when he details some of his plans for the future, notions

that may sound extreme for the Ministry crowd. "I want to put together a string quartet actually, and do some stuff with that. I need to find some people in Seattle who won't charge me for that. People who will work for free. I'll give them record royalties and peanut butter sandwiches," he smiles.

And that's why Pigface works so well. Part power, idealism, imagination, risk and a dare. Pigface is much like Bill Rieflin's habit of when, in a strange city, to merely walk with the lights, crossing the street when you can, to see where your feet will take you. It may be right, it may be left, it may be out of the realm of reality. Pigface does the same for your mind. This is only the beginning! ■



don't move around, I just stand there and listen. So if I had an entire audience of just me, I'd probably think that something was *wrong*. But from my perspective that's the way I enjoy music.

"There are definitely more than a few ways to participate as an audience. Bringing the rollerball gear is not always the best way, especially if you plan to *listen* to the music," is his dry summation.

There's often the wonder if these expected audience behavior patterns aren't the most predictable things: ie., 'these people are from bands like Cocks and Ministry so therefore we must stage dive.' That's why it was fun to see people confused at Pigface as they actually found themselves tricked into lis-





better so I need more time," he explains.

As far as albums go Chris' incredible solo outing *Whiplash Boychild* wins an award for sounding superb on advance tape, and when the CD finally arrived true aural joy set in. I called it near perfect in my initial review: after many more listens it has ascended to completely perfect. Moody, diverse, with that Connelly touch of the perverse, the album unfortunately was scheduled for a March release but due to those distribution problems that sometimes plague albums once delivered to the label, this Wax Trax release didn't make its presence known until June. Instead of being another mutation project from the Chicago mafia

on his new album. The work that I did on that record I am really happy with. I think it's some of the best stuff I've ever done in a long while. It's five songs I'm on but I'm really happy with it. I'm on all of side one. I played piano, and the song 'The Last of Joy' I had kicking around, so I gave it to Chris and he wrote some lyrics. We recorded it and mixed it in like an hour and a half. It was fun. Chris is a really fun guy to work with... he and I share a lot... our musical backgrounds are similar at least. The way we look at things, it fits really well."

And there's more collaboration ahead with Michael Balch, formerly of Front Line, who made the move to Chicago to join the Cocks. Chris notes, "He's living out there now, with William Tucker. We're writing together for my next solo album. In fact, we recorded a track two weeks ago which is really good, I'm really, really happy with it. It's really twisted and perverse," he grins happily. He says that with such relish that I'm glad he's a soft-spoken, cultured guy. But then again so was Dr. Hannibal in *Silence of the Lambs*. Ahem...errr, just kidding!

Even amidst all the hectic scheduling of the Pigface tour, Chris is already into his next album. "I've written about four or five

Chris Connelly has decided to take the plunge. After all those years of working with the Revolting Cocks and Ministry the man has resigned from those particular Chicago-based musical madhouses. "I left the bands and I sure can't go into the gory details," he mocks. "I guess I'm not going to be working with the Cocks or Ministry again. But you know, from a philosophical standpoint, that's fine by me 'cause I've got my solo thing going and it's beginning to take off and once you've done that, once you've made your move there's like a thousand projects to do and I'm always busy so no big deal," he shrugs without the slightest remorse.

"Being in Revolting Cocks and Ministry I found that there was a certain frame I was allowed to be in. Of course I was fine with that, I was happy with it. I really think that Al as a producer is second to none. But I'm a very stubborn chap, and I do like to get *my* way and *he's* a stubborn chap as well, and he likes to get *his* way. (Gee, really?) And when I can't get my way obviously it needs to get out somewhere, in some other way. I mean I can write a tune, etcetera, etcetera. Also I want to learn more about music. I want to take time to learn how to play piano properly, and production interests me a lot, but you know, if I gave 24 hours a day to Ministry and the Cocks I sure wouldn't be able to expand upon that. I mean Al produces and I leave that up to him because he makes the records sound fucking great. There's not much more I can do to make them sound better. But I want to make *my* records sound

ranks, *Whiplash* is very much Chris' album while still working with mob members. "I love music more than anything else in the world, I'm a fan of music, I listen to music all the time. And I keep discovering people that I like, and interest me, and I want to collaborate with them, that's my main thing in life is to create music, and write my poetry; my lyrics, etcetera, etcetera. And it doesn't matter in what setting. I want to try a bit of everything, really, for sure.

"I really love collaborating with Bill Rieflin. We co-wrote some of the songs from my album and we really get on well. There's a certain spark between us that makes writing just a *dream*. Because we know each other so well, and we have very similar tastes in music," he describes enthusiastically.

Bill Rieflin has similar positive thoughts about Chris Connelly. "I went back to Chicago in June to do some work with Chris

tracks. I'm going to be working with Chris Bruce, he plays guitar with Wendy and Lisa, and he lives in Chicago and contacted me and wants to do some stuff. He's a fantastic player, and I really like his stuff. He's gonna be part of the next album."

The beauty of this album is the diversity. From the active to the melodic to the brutal, the album explores depths and heights while adding humor and pain in generous doses. There's plenty of references to suicides and a few to drowning (check out 'The Last of Joy') but then there's the humorously odd 'The Amorous Humphrey Plugg' and the total mess of 'Confessions of the Highest

# CHRIS CONNELLY A BOY

TEXT BY SANDRA A. GARCIA

Bidder' to offset the subtly dark drama "I wanted to make an album that was me, that had my personality on it. I mean even though I've really enjoyed the tours that I've done with the Cocks, they are far more of a they're not really me. With Ministry you're singing about social issues so much of the time so there's not much of a chance for any personality to get through. And although I

*Songs for Drella*, and I thought, 'You know, you don't have to have this in your face dog barking at you to express something that means something to you. You can be as powerful as you like with just your voice, you can be incredibly emotive, and I think maybe we've forgotten that. I mean some of the greatest songs ever written, like Jacques Brel, Scott Walker, it's pure emotion. It's not

into him, and I want to get a bunch of people together to do a tribute album to him. Because nobody's done it yet."

Marc would be up for that as he's also into working with diverse talents. This whole world clique attitude bodes well for the continued growth of different genres. "It's fantastic! And because I travel so much I meet people all the time, and get opportunities to play with them which is great! I mean we worked with Cabaret Voltaire, did the record with them, all sorts of people!"

That Cabaret Voltaire episode already has gone down as semi-legendary, those evil Chicago dudes getting those British boys drunk and then forcing Stephen Malinder to actually sing. "They were great guys! Mal is hilarious, he's really a funny guy. He was a hoot, he was great to work with."

Any preferences to the mixes that resulted from that? "I like them both. They have a great sound, especially the side that the Cabs mixed." Of the continuing inter-continental musical moves Chris feels, "It's a self-perpetuating thing. It will never ever drum out. I mean it happens all the time in the music world. The music world is so small, you travel all over and meet people then you bump into them again and over and over."

But most people don't, make the precious time to go back and work together. They always mean to but often it takes a chance accidental meeting to light the incentive. But even back when Chris was in the adventuresome Fini Tribe, he was working with merging tough, dynamic dance rhythms with twisted lyrics, borrowing from tribal influences. "Fini Tribe was different. They are my school buddies. I worked with these guys since 78-79. For a long time they were more like Wire, I guess. And then we discovered that we really enjoyed working with tribal rhythms, and we all would play percussion. And it all developed from there. I really had a great time with that band when I was in it, they're still my best friends. Some of the stuff that we came out with..." as he grins, immediately frowning. "The only thing that I didn't like about Fini Tribe is that we never got anywhere. And I didn't understand why, cause we released some killer 12 inches, and our shows were great, I mean six guys up there pounding drums... it was really energetic. Oh well!" he shrugs. Fini Tribe sans Chris have a new release out in Great Britain on One Little Indian, judging from the hyper reviews their time may have come!

But back in the early '80's Fini Tribe was definitely head of the maddening crowd. Now Chris jests, "We'll probably be discovered and they'll release some retrospective album and all that bullshit. We did a John Peel session early on that's just great. It sounds like a cross between the Associates and Wire. It's got the same tucked up timing. Maybe it will come out someday."

For all that Chris has been on the performance stage for years, he's never attempted to give a solo reading of his poetry. This night unveils his world premier (drum roll please) spoken word performance at New York's Building, a club known more for its body language than poetic licence. Any pre-performance nerves on Mr. Connelly's part? He shakes his dreads, declaring, "Nervous? No."

(Continued on page 43)



# CHILD ALONE

think that's valuable, I wanted to do an LP that was me. And also an album of music that I enjoyed listening to, that had every single aspect of my personality, the really violent spots, the really quiet spots, like anyone is. The next album will be faithful to that philosophy as well."

And of course, when people are trained to expect a certain style from a vocalist and he does the opposite—the greatest thing about the *Whiplash Boychild* is the return of Chris' lyrical, emotive voice. "I used to sing, then I went all aggro," he laughingly admits. "And all mad at the world. But I figure... I remember listening to Lou Reed's *New York*, and

loud, but it's passionate, it doesn't have to be this annoying growling doggy," he smiles.

That reminds me of when Marc Almond was working on his Jacques Brel collection. Great voices communicate the most complex emotions of all. "I always say I'm gonna get in touch with him real soon about doing a tribute album for Scott Walker. I don't know if you know Scott Walker?" he queries. I feel ignorant when Chris explains that Walker is his favorite singer. "He is probably like a thinking man's Tony Bennett, he was like—he did this kind of music in the '60's, real pretty, loungey almost, but the lyrics were like real existential, and I know Marc Almond is

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SANDRA C. DAVIS



# TENDENCIES

# CONSTRUCTIVIST PUNK

**-By Arleen Colone**

It was a rainy day in 1978, and the Army/Navy store in San Francisco was quite crowded. Before entering the store, I saw about three tired but young punk rockers sitting in front of the store. They were outfitted in flowing shirts, torn jeans, and jump boots, and were fully decorated with safety pins, needles, broken baby dolls and switchblade haircuts held up with red spray paint. They all must have been 16 or so, and the minute I saw them, the girl in the group traipsed up to me and asked, "Hey man, can you spare any change for us? We're all like really hungry." As she said this, the two male punks with her looked up with those long, far away eyes, far from even remotely threatening.

I figured that if I was going to spend so much money on records later on, I could spare a couple of bucks for them. I handed her some money, and she shakingly said thanks and walked off with her friends to a nearby deli. After watching them get a terrible reception from the deli owners but eventually getting their food, I walked into the Army/Navy store. Near the exit, against an old wood wall, was an infamous punk fashion vendor, stocked with buttons, earrings, belts, studded collars and everything else that was seemingly "chic" at the time.

Prominent in the collection was the name Pere Ubu. I had to have noticed it about twenty times on buttons and t-shirts, and the name itself was enough to incite a thousand images of a very eclectic punk band that would be a regular at the Mabuhay Gardens.

"I wish punk had been stillborn," explains

Dave Thomas, the hulking, enigmatic vocalist for Pere Ubu. "It was a destructive movement. There hasn't ever been a wave of that level of groups- there's been good groups, but there's never been an explosion like that before, and there won't be again."

The explosion that brought forth Pere Ubu from the depths of Cleveland's industrial



flats was the same one that helped the Talking Heads, the Patti Smith group, the Ramones and the B-52's rise from the depths of CBGB's. The longevity of the band stems back to the early 1970's, when Dave Thomas and bandmembers Tom Herman, Allen Ravenstein, Peter Laughner, Tim Wright and R. Scott Krauss were joined together by a mission from above to continue something that had been begun earlier. The mission continues, and is immortalized once again after 12 years on the new LP *Worlds in Collision*.

"When we started," explains Dave, "there was no such thing as punk. We sounded pretty much as our record did at the time; I suppose you could have called us avant-garde at that time. At the time, people just said we were weird- there wasn't any new wave, there wasn't anything, really."

"What had happened was very clear. It was another pivotal point in modern electric music. There had been initial teen rebellion type groups, like Screaming Jay Hawkins, Elvis Presley, and all that sort of stuff. There had been the Oklahoma Land Rush phase of things when groups like Beefheart, Zappa, Soft Machine and all these other people were opening up a vast new territory of expression and possibilities."

The expression and possibilities that initially inspired Pere Ubu came along in the wee hours of the early '70's.

"Then comes the period that we're talking about," says Dave, "which is 1973 to 1975,

and there was the next generation: it was us. We looked at our esteemed predecessors who had opened up this brave new world and we said to them, figuratively, 'Well done, comrades. Hand us the torch. We will carry on, we will build this brave new world that you've discovered.' So, all of us young and stupid kids all over the country who had said these things simultaneously to our esteemed predecessors, were serious and dedicated to building this brave new world; to moving back the boundaries of expression, to change the face of music."

Beginning in 1975, the early members of Pere Ubu began the arduous task of fulfilling that mission.

"We all suspected this was a doomed task- that our task was harder than opening up a new territory, for we had to *build* the new territory. That's the reason why you had that initial explosion of groups like the Talking Heads, Tom Verlaine, us, DEVO and other people. It was because we had all been working; we had already said, 'hand us the torch.'"

While some of the bands with the mission were part of the legendary CBGB scene of the time, Pere Ubu made a name for their hometown of Cleveland. Beginning in 1975, they released a few singles and then in 1978 the real process begins. *The Mountain Dance* LP was released, and later came an EP, *Datapanik in the Year Zero*. In 1978, the band released *Dub Housing* and *New Picnic Time*. The music on these records was created in the bleak industrial flats of Cleveland, surely a place for individual expression.

"We were working in absolute isolation," explains Dave. "We were working with absolutely no hope- this was 1973! (not Pere Ubu, but the group before; by Pere Ubu time, we already had quit.) Pere Ubu was just like, 'We'll make this record, and someday somebody will find it and they'll say that it was really interesting. Something was really happening here.' So, when we're talking about 1973, '74, and early 1975, there was nothing! There was no hope, so we did it precisely for

ourselves, precisely for art, and precisely for the principle of it, because it had to be done. That's why Pere Ubu, particularly, has lasted this long—we were really tough. New York, you didn't have it so tough, so there was more temptation to do something else. Cleveland, you didn't have any alternative—you were either on the bus or you weren't.

The sound of the LPs was often compared to that of art rock, and after a time the band was said to be in a sort of ghetto of that style.

"No, they don't call it that, do they?" asks Dave. "Okay, I know they do. I hate that term, any normal sort of person would hate that term. I mean, we're very serious about our art, and very serious about what we do, but it's so demeaning to be called art rock. We're a rock band. I'd stand Pere Ubu against any rock band in the world on just toe-to-toe rock, if we don't beat them, we'll at least stand even with 'em."

"What does 'art rock' mean, anyway? Art rock means it's the same as performance art—it's like slapping raw meat against your forehead and reciting *The Iliad* backwards. It's like worthy but boring, you could see why a person would get excited."

By 1980 Pere Ubu had tread some seriously new ground, but in this year the band released a record that defied all categorization. *The Art of Walking* was far from the band's swansong, but it did provide a middle ground for those who believed in innovative music and those who thought innovation equalled unlistenability.

"Well, it's a very famous record, and an infamous record," explains Dave. "It's a difficult thing, because people look at Pere Ubu, the latest thing that we've done, and say that this is what we do. It's not what we do; what we do is what we've done since 1970, or whatever. Our career is like looking at any object—it's like looking at a cup. If you put it on the table and sit across the room and look at it, you say 'That's a cup.' It's pretty clear cut. But if you actually pick the cup up, look at it from the top, turn it around in your hand, look at the bottom, skew it, see if it can hold water, put coffee or pencils in it, then you know it's a cup because you've seen it from different angles and touched it."

That's Pere Ubu's career: all of our albums are the same album. They're all hideously different and they're all exactly the same. The substance of what we do doesn't change. We created a vehicle in Pere Ubu to deal with the language of human experience, the language of the hopes and dreams and tears of people. People just like you and me. If that sounds pretentious it's okay, because you know what? We're a pretentious group. We're proud of being pretentious and we always want to be pretentious. I would rather strive after something pretentious than to settle for turning out mindless 'boy meets girls' songs. I can do stuff other than that.

To strive away from the pretensions of the art-rock ghetto, the band developed the idea of avant-garage. That immortal catchphrase that took us all in 1988 ended in the declaration, they stare at you in disbelief.

Art rock is a ghettoization; that's what we invented the term 'avant-garage.' Because it doesn't mean anything, but it sounds like it should.

The avant-garage came back into play in 1988 after a number of turbulent years in the

history of Pere Ubu. Bandmembers came and went, and in 1987 went their separate ways (for solo projects, that is). Dave, Tony Maimone, and Allen Ravenstine all played in David Thomas and the Wooden Birds, one of the solo projects, and the band included mega-guitarist Jim Jones and former Henry Cow Art Bears drummer Cris Cutler. At a show in Cleveland in 1986, the original Ubu drummer joined them onstage and led a comeback?

Ah, I don't know, remarks Dave. "Comeback album maybe if we had anything to come back from or to come back to. *Innocent Year* was a noisy record, and that's what it was supposed to be. When I use the term noisy, it's a complementary term. You choose a style, a vehicle, a medium, specifically for a message. We have done records where the



medium is the message, but only one. Otherwise, the theme, the ideas that went into *The Innocent Year* required a noisy record, and that record was noisy. It was a typical Pere Ubu record.

Ubu's urge is to fill space; if one idea is good, eight ideas are better. If you can cram seven ideas into a quarter of a millisecond, it's much better to cram in fourteen, if you can manage it. So that was what *The Innocent Year* was. When we finished, there was no place else to go along that path. We didn't particularly want to go any further than that, because then it would be a parody.



The fury of *The Innocent Year* brought Pere Ubu back to its cult of fans and a ratio of others, but 1989's *Cloudland* took the band to an even more testy department, that of accessibility. Tempting slices of pop like 'Why Go It Alone?' and 'Waiting for Mary' were a far cry from the classic 'Final Solution.' 'Love Love Love' wrenched the blues, while the quirky 'Nevada' borrowed from the beach boys. 'Sloop John B.' The period between *Pet Sounds*, *Smiley Smile*, *Honey*, and *Surf's Up* should be a mandatory subject for anyone who dares to write about rock music, Dave claims.

The mission that Dave mentioned earlier was joined on *Cloudland* by former Captain Beethart and Snaketinger member Eric Drew Feldman on keyboards. Could the esteemed predecessors be doomed on this mission as well?

Finally, 1991 sees the release of the latest accessible record from Pere Ubu, *Worlds In Collision*. Although new listeners will certainly not be scared off by the hulking frame of the lead singer when the band breaks into 'Oh Catherine' or 'Smoke the Barbecue,' this new LP still isn't as safe as you think. It still has that Pere Ubu feel, a brooding omen that tells you there is a lot more behind the music than just sweet sounds.

Dave summarizes: "Pere Ubu creates music that doesn't fit, for people who don't fit. I'm into music, I'm into the art of it. This generation that I was a part of had a mission. I don't care if it's a stupid mission, and I don't care if it's doomed, because it was doomed from the beginning. I'm still on that mission, and I'm still doomed!"

Photos by Michele Taylor



TEXT BY MARCI COHEN

PHOTOS BY MICHELE TAYLOR

"Fishbone in the house!" exuberantly declare the bands' two guitarists, Kendall Jones and John Bigham. They and the rest of the band are in New York to mix their new album, *The Reality of Our Surroundings*, the follow-up to 1988's *Truth and Soul*. "In the reality of our surroundings. Just the plight of what young black people go through in this country," summarizes Kendall. "The future doesn't look promising with the way that people, that we elect in offices to govern us and invent the laws that are supposed to help the masses of the people. It's just about all of that."

Contrary to the rumors accompanying Fishbone's closing night performance at last year's New Music Seminar in New York, they haven't abandoned their native Los Angeles for the Big Apple. "No, we definitely ain't gonna move here. It's cool to hang out. I love New York City, but it ain't enough space," insists Kendall. They originally intended to record the album in New York at that time, John explains. "We would have maybe been in jail if we would have come here to record because Fishbone..." Kendall interrupts, "We have entirely too much fun when



we're in New York. That's why it's hard to stay here." Still the true Angeleno, Kendall is wearing a Raiders turtleneck for the occasion. Or so he tells me. We're on the opposite ends of a phone line from New York to Philadelphia.

John, newest to the fold, relates "the official story" on how he came to join Kendall, drummer Fish, vocalist Angelo Moore, bassist John Norwood Fisher, trombone / keyboard player Chris Dowd and trumpet player Walter Adam Kibby II. "We all hang out in the same crowd, basically, and just got used to playing together in other bands... And we got to know each other and found out we didn't



get along, so we figured we'd be in a band together" Kendall augments the account. "We like playing a lot. We're addicted to playing. And John is like the seventh personality. Everybody in the band of Fishbone is a completely, radically different individual. And John's energy just puts it completely over the top. And it's working."

"Fish introduced me to the rest of the guys in the band. We used to play in a three-piece band outside of Fishbone whenever they were off," John continues. "And everybody came down to sit in and it just developed into a really cool friendship. I don't know what they were thinking about when they asked me to be in the band. Nobody's ever told me." Kendall answers John's question. "We were loosing our minds at that point. We were stressing, and we said, 'Damn, this shit needs something else!'" John adds, "Plus, I had a car." Kendall acquiesces, "Yeah! That's the main thing. He has a car. See, I don't have a car, and I live in Hollywood. And he drives me around." So he was brought in as transport before anything else? "It helps that he's also a good guitar player, too," compliments Kendall.

Another change for Fishbone is their first attempt at self-production, although long-time producer David Kahne helped on co-production. "What made us take it over ourselves is we pretty much knew musically where we wanted to get to. And we had amassed a certain amount of studio knowledge and we felt we could do it," explains Kendall. "And this will be the first time when everybody can get a complete Fishbone record that's more true to the live show musically, the variety in the live show. You get everything on this thing. There's no punches pulled on this record." Before I can ask about any other new developments, they break away to attend to one. Chuck D will be remixing one of their songs.

When *Truth and Soul* came out, Chris described it as controlled anarchy. Kendall ditches the adjective in categorizing the new album. "Completely uncontrolled shit! It might even be a little bit more together, but it's kind of cool. It's in complete disarray, but the music is slammin'. It's not confusing, but if you sit back and listen to what's happening, there's a war going on in the tracks." He backtracks at the mention of that other war. "Yeah, there's a party. There's a lot of shit going on, things playing off each other. See, the difference between our war and the war in the Middle East is that our shit ain't bullshit."

We spoke when the war was still waging, when Scuds were more of a concern than Kurds. Kendall offered his perspective on the conflict. "I support the troops, but I think the best way of supporting the troops is bringing them home. And this is a bullshit ass war and I ain't with it one way or another. The people that are going to die in this war when the shit escalates, there's gonna be more black

people dead than anybody out there." John inserts "And hispanics."

Kendall concurs and proceeds, "I would feel a little better about this war if the poor wasn't fighting it." Someone once pointed out that such wars would end much faster if the rich white legislators who send troops off to battle were out on the front line themselves rather than sitting back in Washington, doing business

political thing."

One ongoing theme Kendall mentions is racism. Because Fishbone's audience crosses racial barriers, he sees them playing an important social function. "I understand what it means to be black and American. And there's not one particular thing that a black person goes through. There's different experiences in different cities. But the commonaleness that we go through is that we pretty much

bear the brunt of somebody's fouled up sexual consciousness. And what we feel is that you don't have to hate white people collectively. It's not about that. It's not about hating anybody. There are people that will sit up there and call white people the devil, and there are pretty good examples in history why people should think that. There's pretty good examples today why people should think that too. Not all people are like that. You have to judge people: the people that you meet and deal with. Everyone can contribute something positive to the world. I think that if you delude yourself into thinking "All white are the devil. All black people are stupid," that you're definitely missing out on the whole human experience. Because we all have one planet. We should think globally. It's hard as hell to do it."

Next question: "What's the first single?" "More Profound Rhetoric," jokes Kendall. Never accuse Fishbone of taking themselves too seriously. In truth, they were leaning towards "Sunless Saturday" at the time.

Between their youth and their avoidance of an easily identifiable style, Fishbone have



# FIRST ACROSS THE WIRE

ment. "It doesn't have to be rich," Kendall agrees. "It had to be white people. We don't have to pull any punches. It's the truth. I ain't a racist, but I'm aware of demographic reality. Most of the people that I know that are poor aren't white."

Kendall is still draft age, but downplays that concern in terms of his overall viewpoint. "I ain't going anyway. I'd go to Leavenworth over this shit if I had to. I just don't believe in this shit. I think that I would feel a lot better about the war if George Bush just straight out and leveled with everybody. Because that's the case. They've been so arbitrary about enforcing our justice when other countries get invaded. It's not to stop aggression. It's for fucking oil. Look, we know that Saddam Hussein is an asshole. We know this motherfucker's an asshole. But a lot of people don't know history. If you're going to keep acting like the world's police at one point, like the Roman Empire and the British Empire, the shit's going to fall. You can't afford to do that kind of shit. Just get your shit together and try to live in peace. It's not the whole world. It's just motherfucking stupid racist assholes."

*The Reality of Our Surroundings* was recorded before the war broke out and came out after the cease fire, so it doesn't deal with the Gulf Crisis directly, as Kendall explains. "It's a little bit more timeless than that. It doesn't address a particular conflict. It's not going to be like 'This is the theme of the day.' We've always had that quality to addressing things that are timeless socially as opposed to some



had the 1991 story of Somalia, still they remain optimistic. "The only problems we had was that we had to play twenty-one and over clubs and they wouldn't let us in the motherfucking club physically until it was time to play and set up. That was one of the main problems," says Kendall of their early days. The band formed a dozen years ago when they were in junior high school. "You learn. You go through management. You go through booking agencies. You go through a

(Continued on page 38)



lot of changes, always transitional. And hopefully the decisions that you make coming up are the right ones. Yeah, there's always gonna be points where you say, 'Damn, I should have turned left here instead of going right.' But that's a part of life."

They are also progenitors in the trend of genre blending, their mix of punk, ska, funk, metal serving as the prototype for other kitchen-sink bands since "There's always going to be shit that lays on the

Kendall. "And it was cool. I don't give a fuck if you're doing country music. Any music, if you go to a good LA Philharmonic show, you can tell when they're just sitting back playing the groove or when they're in it. You have to love what you do. And I think that's the nature of being a musician. Whether you're a rapper, you're still a musician. And that's the nature. The good ones are the musicians."

*Truth and Soul* included a cover of Curtis Mayfield's 'Freddie's Dead.' The news of Curtis's paralyzing accident didn't distress Fishbone as much as their thwarted attempts to help him. "I found it particularly upsetting because we did a benefit for Curtis Mayfield and none of the money got to him," complains Kendall. The concert at the Palace in Los Angeles included Ice T, Mellow Man Ace, Kid Frost and was intended as a both tribute to and benefit for Curtis and his family. "The proceeds were going to help him out. And the Palace went Chapter 6 and Curtis never got his money." However, they did get to work with Curtis on a song for 'I'm Gonna Git You Sucka.'

Living in Hollywood, the members of Fishbone get plenty on opportunities to work in film. "We have friends that are actors and we have friends that are producers, believe it or not. So when they say, 'Hey, Fishbone, want to do something in this movie?' we'll say, 'Yeah, cool,'" explains Kendall. For *Tapeheads*, they composed the score and appeared as an alter-ego, Ranchbone. "And, boy, that was a lesson. It was cool because we had to completely wing all this music at one point. The fuckers came in and said, 'Hey! You got to do this!' So we came up with a lot of music really quick. It was funny. But it was cool. It worked out. But basically we said, 'Man, what would be the illest thing we can do?' So we said that Fishbone is definitely not country and western. So we wrote a black power country and western song... Not to belittle black nationalism. It was definitely designed to raise a few eyebrows but be amusing at the same time."

Kendall enjoys the challenge of scoring films, but isn't entirely

enthralled by the work. "I ain't gonna be like Danny Elfman or no shit like that. I don't want to be known as some fucking film score god. I'm a musician. I like performing in front of people. But, yeah, it does interest me because it gets you to do an outlet for a lot of the songs that your band rejects... I'm more into the incidental music, what the mood is about when I listen to something. The incidental music is cool. It sets up the whole scene. I loathe the fact of working on a set because in music, it's immediate. In the movies, it's hurry up and wait. You're on call. You're sitting on the set. You're waiting. Then the A/V comes out and then you're waiting some more. You're usually dealing with coke fiends, and I ain't with that."

With *The Reality of Our Surroundings*, Kendall sees Fishbone poised for success. "This is even more hardcore than any Fishbone record. It's got all the energy in the world. It is everything you thought about Fishbone doing and were afraid to ask.. it's got good songs. But they're all real songs, strong songs. I think we're gonna be big, real big. But then again, I'm not geared towards failure. But I can deal with whatever I'm dealt with. I'd be lying if I said I didn't want to play stadiums three nights in a row and outdo the Rolling Stones in attendance. But I understand what it takes to do that. And what got the Rolling Stones there is that they didn't sell out what they did. They are what they are. You can call them dinosaurs, but they're still around. I think true success is knowing what you are and that's what brings it to the surface. You can have manufactured groups. You can have your Vanilla Ice shit, but that shit doesn't last for fucking over thirty years. That's what we're about. We're into long term— we've been together for twelve years, and John's been drug down with the rest of us, and it's gonna be a beautiful thing." Beautiful, indeed. **B**



Photos by Michele Taylor

barbed wire for other things to get across, I definitely feel like one of the bands that laid on the barbed wire, but I don't feel bad about the bands getting across," says Kendall. "I just think what a lot of people categorize, if you're to talk about funk metal, there's those people that try and play funky metal, and then there's funky metal. I think if you want to call it a funk metal type thing, I think more like a fake rock type metal that a lot of people do."

Kendall reiterates the idea in discussing early shows when audiences tried to ignore them. "We're talking a lot of knocks growing up. In this industry, we've been doing what we've done for a long time in a situation that isn't as abundant for our type of music. Now Faith No More can get over it, which is cool. Back then, doing that kind of music was very difficult. The Chili Peppers, we all pretty much went through the same shit. Jane's Addiction, at one point, when they started. Everyone has to pay their dues. And there's always a time where people won't listen to you because they don't get what you're doing. And you don't necessarily reevaluate. You just grow more. You get more strength in your shit and you do it. And if you're a musician and you love music and you listen to different music, you understand what's good about music, or at least what's good to you."

The growing acceptance of a wider range of music hasn't come automatically. "I think if a motherfucker screams loud enough, you're going to hear him," says Kendall of the process. "People are going to always try to pigeonhole this band. They want to nail us down." But what can you call Fishbone? "I don't know what we are, so what can they call us? We're musicians," he retorts. "That's it. That's why John's in the band. He's a fucking musician. All of us are musicians first. We're not the most technically proficient instrumentalists if you want to look at it like that. We're not like jazz snobs and shit like that. But we really enjoy playing. When I was here in New York, I went and saw Neil Young at the Garden. I enjoyed the show because he just played. He just got up there, rocked out."

"Cranked his stuff up," adds John. "Played loud and did what he did, and had energy and just believed in what he did," resumes

## MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO (Continued fr. pg. 21)

in America after the dust cleared. "With Wax Trax, they definitely broke us and I think we broke them, we broke the mold they had. It worked both ways. It's a shame that our label let it go as far as it did, but Play It Again did pick up the bill for that in a monetary way."

Meat Beat, being the challenging band it is, has had its share of hostile audiences not sure what to make of the dancers in—don't say it! "Germany was really static, and uninterested. The only place in America that seemed uninterested was Cleveland, and I chipped my tooth on the microphone and fell off the stage, all in the same night. When we were on it was pretty static, but then again that's what every London crowd is like. People don't go to gigs to be negative unless you're in England. So we're more used to it than say Nine Inch Nails. When they go off to Europe I don't think they'll know what to expect, being such a big band over here and starting anew over there."

When casually queried if the band has ever opened for a group whose audience just totally hated them and wouldn't give them an microsecond of attention, Jack muses, "I can't think of any shows—the only band we really opened for was Nine Inch Nails so... is there one you're thinking of?" he wonders.

No, just making conversation. "Oh good, I thought there was one you knew about and that I forgot about!" he laughs with relief.

Yeah, I'm so evil I'm just waiting for you to slip up, right? Jack laughs, exclaiming, "But Nine Inch Nails was just in one situation... opening for Jane's Addiction?" Jack had been in Los Angeles for that fiasco. Bits and bloody pieces have filtered back concerning those shows. Poor Trent. "They were just faced with this... I don't know, I don't know where Jane's Addiction are coming from. I'm not really sure what musical influences they're from. They look like... two of them look really like a LA glam rock band and then the singer doesn't, then the singer doesn't sound like it but the guitar lines do. And then the crowd doesn't really look like a rock audience, but they all get their lighters out! Oh yeah, it was really vomit, the old vomit bag stuff! There were like 6000 people there and it was sold out three nights in a row so it was worth it for Nine Inch Nails to do it but the audience was just totally turned off. There were some Nine Inch Nails fans there but totally outnumbered."

Jack thinks about it and sighs, claiming, "Oh well, it will probably happen to us one day. We'll probably get put on with Vanilla Ice," he laughs. "Oh, that's a joke. But I'll tell you about it if it ever happens!"

He's the worst excuse for a rap... I can't say artist cause he definitely ain't one. He's too easy a target for ridicule. "I think he's the worst. I think Vanilla Ice is to rap music what... no, no, he's more like the necrophilic of rap music. He doesn't only do it to it but he fucks it up totally. He took what used to be a good idea and totally bastardizes it. He's worse than M.C. Hammer. At least M.C. Hammer doesn't wear 'Word to Your Mother' on his back," he laughs with disgust. "One of our first singles has got a line in the middle of it going 'this is the death of rap music.' To me it's been dead for years. Any musical form that relies on being able to rhyme the last sentence with the next is real immature, primary school stuff. We did some of that rhyming stuff on our first album, but I'll lean more towards dance genre then anything else."

"Even with people like Vanilla Ice screwing it up, there are always people out there trying to do it well. Public Enemy is still rap music but it's still good! It's good to have so many different facets of the music. And it's not as if rap is going to go completely away... I mean we still have 45-50 year old men in rock and roll music."

"But I don't think there's ever been a point in the history of rock and roll where someone has worn 'Word to Your Mother' on his back. I think that says it all. That sums it up," he concludes with another shuddering laugh.

At least there are still lethal bands like Meat Beat to keep the cutting edge sharp like a scythe through the dead wood. Jack finds it easy to keep that edge to Meat Beat. "Oh yeah! It all depends on what you feel like. If you're a very sort of content, hippy-ish type of person living in the country side off the fat of the land with 15 cats, I don't think you're gonna produce music with a particular edge to it. So I think it comes back on your situation really. Unless you're bastardizing something. That's why I do feel a bit dubious about Public Enemy singing about certain important issues when they're millionaires. It's not so bad making people aware of issues but at the end of it they should sing, 'Yeah, and I'm a millionaire! And I don't care!'" he rhymes wickedly.

So Meat Beat better watch out for any sudden fame and fortune. "If we get really popular I'll just go: 'Hey, I'm a millionaire and I don't care!'" he laughs.

Then you'll have to give up music because the guilt feelings will overwhelm you. Jack will have to do something honest like become a hot producer who is more important than his clients. "With my own record label like Quincy Jones. Maybe my own television network," he grandly projects.

The MBM brainwash network. Music for the mind 24 hours a day. That doesn't sound too shabby! But if you want to know the truth behind Meat Beat, the true manifesto according to Jack, take note: The whole reason for my musical career is to diss Vanilla Ice," he claims with convincing sincerity before mockingly laughing. Brave Jack knew slimy Ice was slipping along and he's manning the salt line against him. Since there's a trend towards tours from Hell (the Banshees with Jane's Addiction? Words fail me.) we plan the next big tour of tours, the Vanilla Ice-New Kids on the Block tour. "Oh yeah, they would be great! I wouldn't want to be the sound man for that! Let alone go there," he mockingly shivers.

So who would Jack go see? "My favorite live band is a band called Blurt. They've been going for about ten years now, played like the smallest clubs, haven't got a record deal,

the singer is 48 and they are absolutely amazing. The nearest thing to that is Captain Beethart, who is my other favorite idol. And my other favorite group is the Cocteau Twins. And all those people, they've always been happy in what they're doing. And so am I. I wouldn't have a need to sound like anyone else."

Come on Jack, I have to call you on this one... the Cocteau Twins have been sounding the same for a long time now—and for a man who's so into change... "But they do it so well that it doesn't matter," he helplessly chuckles. Oh, you fan you. "I think they do anyway." He laughs at my pointed groan, admitting, "I don't like them live though, live it's just... you might as well just play the CD. It sounds exactly the same. It's perfect, and you can appreciate the musicianship, but I do draw the line somewhere. If a band is going to go on tour I believe it's pointless to imitate what you've got on record."

That essential live technique will just have to be left to diverse bands like Meat Beat, constantly going for that energy to recreate something new. Obviously the Cocteau Twins don't want that. So that's why you're Meat Beat and that's why they're Cocteau Twins.

Jack bursts into chuckles, "I've never heard that one before. That's a good one. I'll remember that one. It's gonna be on my grave stone."

Hopefully the engraving of such will be in the distance future! Jack and Meat Beat Manifesto have just begun to fight. And judging the state of music, it's going to be a battle. May the best band win. ■





## JESUS JONES SOHO

*Chestnut Cabaret, Philadelphia, PA*

I'll admit it, I only gave Soho's debut album *Goddess* a curiosity listening, finding it enjoyable but nothing to really get worked up about. But put them on a stage in front of a few hundred sweat-soaked bodies and then they're something to get mighty worked up about.

Being that the air conditioning was apparently not up for the season yet, the club was doing a fair imitation of a roasting pan. The packed yet healthily moving crowd wasn't making the matter any cooler. But the women of Soho made it worth the sweat. Twin sisters Jackie and Pauline acted like two schoolgirls out on the lark of their lives, constantly thanking the rabid audience for their reaction. They played the song that started it all for them, 'Hippychick' a song not about the summer of love but in actuality a confrontational song



portraying a scene between a woman in a miner's demonstration and her ex-boyfriend who's a policeman. The theory? She's no hippychick going to sleep with him to change his mind. The audience reacted to the song's melody but the message was lost. It really doesn't come across all that strongly: if you want it, it's there for you. And how many people

## THE SOUP DRAGONS

*The Academy  
New York, NY*

It was like "New Delhi On The Hudson" in New York City. First it was Tanita at 8PM, and then the triumphant return of the Soup Dragons (with the pride of India and Apu Simpson's cousin on bass, Sushil Dade) at 10PM. The Soupies played a headlining performance at the Academy, a smart move given the 30 minute set at the MonoSodium Glutamate arena in February with INXS. A good crowd turned out, as usual, and the light show never ceased to amaze.

Lately, most of the legendary Manchester bands that hit New York City, feature a DJ or an MC as an opening act. The Soup Dragons did the same with their appearance, (although they are from Scotland), but in the end it seemed to be just background music for the crowd ready for a party. I had never seen so many band t-shirts stretched over business suits in my life; it made one wonder if the band intends to appeal to the neo-hip (but thankfully dead) yuppie scene, or if their music is just mainstream enough to attract Hot 97 enthusiasts.

"There's always been a dance element to our music," said Sean Dickson when the new and improved Soup Dragons released their LP *Lovegod*. The band was once a member of that heavenly scene in 1986 that was chronicled by the "C86" compilation, and even played a show in that year with such bands as the Primitives and the Shop Assistants. Some admit that the band is able to adapt their sound to any new musical movement that comes along, and to do it very well. Others rant that the SDs are mere rip-off artists. At the Academy show, Dickson made his feelings quite adamant during the bridge in 'I'm Free' "Ah, fuck the Charlatans!"

Could it have been a joke? The Soup Dragons have become one of the more notable Manchester groups, despite their homeland of Glasgow. They featured the logo for the Hacienda on the 12" remix of 'I'm Free,' their huge single, and employed a dancey, smoky, hazy ambience to their music. While the Stone Roses were tied up in a legal battle with Silverstone, the road was free for bands like the Soup Dragons and the Charlatans to move in and assault America.

The show at the Academy was no exception. The band had a good turnout of fans, and played a strong, loud set. Songs such as 'Backwards Dog,' 'Sweet Meat' and 'Mother Universe' sounded great, and, as anyone would expect, 'I'm Free' incited the standing ovation. It was a fine conclusion to the band's three gig New York assault, first at the Ritz for the CMJ Convention, next at MSG

for exposure with INXS, but this time for their fans. After the show, three members of the band retreated to

the Limelight (stop ragging on its name!) for an after show party. It was at the perfect time, for all the "Club Kids" were out in full force and in full androgyny. The dancefloor was packed, and the girls in the cages were grinding to the remix of 'I'm Free.' The sight of excited club patrons raving away to the fine sounding single showed that despite the band's wavering musical tastes, they are able to carry them off very well.

-By Arleen Colone

## GOO GOO DOLLS BIG DRILL CAR

*Club Lingerie  
Los Angeles, CA*

Certifiably insane.

Yes, those who failed to experience the Hollywood stop on the Goo Goo Dolls seemingly never-ending *Hold Me Up* tour - with So California's wonderful Big Drill Car serving as opening act - are to be officially declared, certifiably insane.

Never failing to execute an extraordinarily energized show, Orange County's own Big Drill Car blew away the packed Lingerie with their opening set of Minneapolis-meets-Seattle sounding punk-influenced pop. Throughout their great 45-minute set of new-and-as yet-unreleased material, as well as old favorites such as 'Diamond Earrings,' '16 Lines,' and 'Hold On,' BDC vocalist and Ted Nugent look-a-like Frank Daly demonstrated his finest, trademark, neo-*Exorcist* moves, thrilling all of the young, male, beer-drinking, Snickers-eating, throwing-up in the parking lot-types attempting a poorman's version of slam dancing at the foot of the small stage. Testosterone is such a wonderful hormone. (By the way, those of us who don't drag our knuckles when we walk also enjoyed BDC's set.)

A while back, I read in some "hardcore or death" fanzine that the Goo Goo Dolls perform something that was termed as "cute punk." Now, I don't take too well to cuteness, thus I have never considered that grotesque term as accurately describing the sound of the Goo's. Fun, yea. Cute, NO.

Of course, this fine Buffalo, New York, trio is not trying to be Fugazi or anything. Rather, the Goo Goo Dolls appear to be perfectly content in playing their fun, fast, furious, crowd-pleasing, hook-laden pop tunes, thank you.

Rivalling speed most commonly found on the German autobahn, alternating Goo Goo vocalists Johnny and Robby (who happened to demonstrate his remarkable fashion-sense by donning a "passionate purple" B-Side t-shirt), (Watta guy!-

Photo by Sandra C. Davis

like me instantly reacted negatively to the song due to its Smith's 'How Soon is Now' sampling at the beginning? But there's a lot more substance and spunk to this band than meets the ear. Not only do they make catchy pop dance sounds but they inject them with messages at the same time.

In actuality, the rest of Soho's material, like 'Goddess' and 'Freaky' border on grandly aggressive aggro-pop dance sounds, with the twin's perfect voices bringing the songs back into the pure pop arena. They performed with enough conviction and energy to give this casual observer an entirely new perspective on their music. The fact that they were females onstage had nothing to do with their performance: they were up there to have a good time and didn't need to rely on their wiles to seduce the audience, which was a refreshing change from many female performers in the dance pop genre.

Live performances truly expose a band's soul to their audience: that's why never trust a band that won't tour. They're hiding something. Soho gave of themselves in massive amounts and deserved every decibel of the applause accorded them.

Oh, and those Jones boys? Haven't I said enough about them? I found an old live report I had written up on them from last tour with the remark "they are going to be huge" scribbled on it. I didn't have room for that live report. I think I've made up for that oversight. Live they were everything promised and performed to the max even though they were losing gallons of body fluid in the outrageous heat. Guitarist Jerry even had a constant stream of sweat dripping from his nose, while Mike Edwards was drenched by the end of the first song. I can't see how he can afford to lose much off his slender frame! They made a few remarks in jest about the heat but that never stopped them from becoming the whirling dervishes they are onstage. The only complaint? (Come on, there has to be one...) Why in God's name drag out 'Blissed' for an encore? It went on and on and on... they should have changed the name to 'Dripped.' Aside from that petty detail, I look forward to their return: hopefully as you read this!

All right, two complaints: why is it the nicest bands have the nastiest tour crews? Either they all had major male PMS or just having to work in that heat irritated them. They were harassing people who were merely watching the show, treating every female like she was a likely candidate to jump a band member. Even yours truly. Maybe someone had at another show, but that didn't permit them to be such prats. Talk about "small" people!

-by Sandra Garcia

Editor) blasted Linger patrons faces off with their manic, adrenalin-rushing renditions of such Goo classics as 'On Your Side,' 'You Know What I Mean,' 'Know My Name,' and 'Just The Way You Are,' proving that they don't take to well to cuteness either.

Being that Hollywood is so damn special, the Goo Goo Dolls returned for their obligatory encores and introduced their super-special guest-vocalist, straight from the Spinners tour, The Incredible Lance Diamond. Decked-out in his mighty-fine black suit and matching mafia type hat, Mr. Diamond proceeded to throw roses to the Hollywood masses while requesting their participation (a notoriously difficult task in the city of angels) in chanting the ever-popular "HO-O." In addition (as if that wasn't enough), the Incredible One also took time to croon a couple of Motown favorites as well as his *Hold Me Up* contribution of Prince's 'Never Take The Place Of Your Man.' Quite an incredible show.

Certifiably excellent

-by Maureen Odell

## HAPPY MONDAYS

The Academy  
New York, NY

When you're an English rock star in the United States, it's bad enough. When you're an English rock star and one of the most notorious advocates of Ecstasy in the world, that's even worse. Neither of these factors seemed to affect the second trip to the US for the inevitable Happy Mondays, and, unfortunately, all the E, C or H in NYC couldn't have stopped the sluggish and drawn out performance at the Academy last month.

Right, the Academy is much larger than the last place the Mondays packed, the Sound Factory during the New Music Seminar of 1990, but word had it that that performance included more songs, more stage action, more excitement, and more fun than the Happy Mondays were once known for. The early shows in the UK were more fresh, but nearer the end of the line, when the band finally hit headlining status at Wembley arena, most early fans and music notables decided to skip the rest of the set for the sake of not falling asleep.

If it wasn't for the presence of Bez and Rowetta at this show, and the increasingly tight and undulating crowd, I might have fallen asleep as well. The band came on stage to the strains of 'Donovan,' and for a half hour to forty minutes, displayed an endless barrage of undertow. The only saving graces were when Bez would use his maracas as a phallic symbol, and Rowetta would use her cat o' nine tails to put him back into his place.

Being in the front but at the side of the stage, I was able to set my eyes upon the band's gyrating manager,

who helped provide another one of the evening's rare exciting moments. Since when has a band's manager been better to look at than the performers? Forget the trendy pulled back hair and receding hairline manger cliché—this man can really get down with the twentysomething!

During the Mondays set of about six songs, Bez and Rowetta danced and gyrated and helped wake up Shaun and the boys. Gaz Whelan was shamefully hidden behind a large set of earphones over a mass of human hair, but the rest of the band were in full view and did play quite well. 'Kinky Afro' and the encore of 'Step On' were highlights, but the crowd really wanted to hear 'Bob's Yer Uncle.' Bad move boys, to not play it -- it really would have given you some slack.

I swear I saw Melanie Mayron at that show, or was it a publicist from Warners? Who knows. Everyone at the show looked so Deee-Lite you couldn't tell who was who. There were barely any hooded tops or baggy trousers, like last time. Just flowered stretch pants and tons of pancake make-up and leather jackets. What happened to Madchester? Guess it flew out the window when the Mondays hit Wembley.

-by Arleen Colone

## THE PET SHOP BOYS

Blackpool Opera House  
Blackpool, England

Remember when Elvis died, and the radio played his records all day? Then John Lennon died, and the radio played his records all day. I hope Kyle Minogue never dies!

But full-sequenced back-to-back PSB's ain't so bad. Familiar themes flow into each other in a seamlessly programmed digital remix of the decade's most finely crafted (what we used to call) Electro-Pop. A Golden mile of hits.

There are fifteen people on stage, ten dancers who do all the body flips and terpsichorean gymnastics that you expect from, say, *West Side Story* or *Starlight Express*. Then there are three back-up singers—no, not Dusty, Lisa and Pasty Kensit, although when 'Rent' comes along, it's handled by one of them after the style of the Minelli cover. Lastly, and oddly enough it is lastly, almost as though they are guest star walk-ons on their own show, there's Neil and Chris. Left to their own devices, largely immobile. Shunted to one side. Tennant's voice is strong and distinctive, even when mixed down into the massive production of 'Jealously,' or it can be teasingly whimsical as on 'I'm Not Scared.' But as for the visual presence, that's left to the spot-on light show, and the dancers. There are shadowy machine operators in the wings supplementing the sound, which is never less than immaculate.

## THE DIVINYLS SCHOOL OF FISH

The Trocadero, Philadelphia, PA

I thought this show would be packed, especially since that silly single 'I Touch Myself' had been getting some fairly extensive airplay. Gag. But surprise, surprise, this wasn't the case. Not even on a Friday night. I guess all the yuppies were over at the Steve Winwood / Warren Zevon show. Imagine that, Virgin records was pitting its acts one against the other on the same night.

But School of Fish is a Capitol act, and so they weren't in the competition. Likeable, with a touch of self-conscious "hey, are people really are looking at us" attitude, these Fish swam a much more relaxed path than some other Fish bands I can think of. Possibly their most amazing accomplishment is that they managed to get themselves noticed in the rat race of Los Angeles bands. I'll give them marks for managing to sound like they do in all that glam scam, a melodic mix of haunting guitars and longing vocals their forte. Once in awhile they threw in a harder edged sound, which seemed to be newer material. This

bodes well for them, as their slower material had a tendency to wander. But these are early days for this band, so they're off to a good start.

But these aren't early days for the Divinyls. Nope. The Divinyls have been around for quite awhile, and when I think of them, I remember that video where Chrissie kept playing with a light stick while dancing in a sailor's suit. Was that '83? '82? My, how things have changed.

I originally wasn't going to stick around for their whole set but we kept sitting there wondering when they were going to remember they were onstage. Let me correct that, master guitarist Mark McEntee and the other members performed their hearts out, but our girl Chrissie Amphlett just wasn't there. The



obvious decision made was the woman can't sing and move at the same time. She was sister to a wooden plank for all her stiffness. Occasionally Chrissie teetered about with these queer little shuffling steps—we weren't sure if she just likes this move or she really can't walk on spike heels, much like me. 'Bless My Soul It's Rock and Roll' found her kicking up a leg but she wasn't singing at the time.

Chrissie definitely looked like a woman uncomfortable in the role she has adopted, corsetted into her skimpy stage outfit. She wasn't seductive, she wasn't fascinating, she wasn't cold, coy, brazen, exciting—she just wasn't. A weird mix of street urchin and rock chanteuse, she hadn't decided what to project from the stage, which made for a very dull show.

By the time 'Pleasure and Pain' came along there was the promise of a performance, but that was already the last song. A little too little too late.

Someone in the audience yelled, 'Gee, I can't guess what the encore will be' as the band ambled back out, doing a nice acoustic number then of course presenting 'I Touch Myself.' I hope she doesn't do that in public. But ultimately the only reason this band got noticed was due to the fact that they created a notorious song, not due to the fact they suddenly became a noticeable band. They're a competent band with a great guitarist in Mark, but in Chrissie they've got a middle range player who has a curious voice, bad dress sense, and little to no stage presence. Maybe she should watch some tapes of Deborah Harry, Siouxsie, Chrissie Hynde or even Jay Aston or (on a good night) Peter Murphy to get a large refresher in onstage mastery.

At least I can say Ms. Amphlett didn't descend to the cheap sex and thrills level I half feared. But she never ascended to any level of interest at all. The rest of the band should threaten her into reacting. Or just find a new vocalist who cares about her audience.

-by Sandra Garcia



# LIVE

Almost too immaculate. The sense of danger or unpredictability is razored away to noting. Midway there's an intermission which further loses some of the show's momentum, and although that's successfully regained by the awesome power of material

like 'It's a Sin,' 'West End Girls,' or their creative re-working of U2's 'Where the Streets Have No Name,' the P.S.B.'s live is like a comfortable radio-friendly and never disturbing experience.

-by Andy Darlington

## TANITA TIKARAM

*Symphony Space, New York, NY*

Wasn't it this past January when Tanita Tikaram and company said that she would not appear on *Letterman* again? It seemed to be the general dislike of having to play with the World's Most Dangerous Band, and for Tanita, it meant the near marring of one of her songs that was not as "throwaway" as the boys thought it was. Her performance on the show in 1988 left something to be desired, as was her sit-down interview that made havoc out of her age and rapid success.

So I find it, in 1991, funny to see Tanita hamming it up on *Letterman* with the house band (featuring her horn section, at least) once again with a new song, 'Deliver Me' and a new short hair look. I was able to catch her once more in a lie with the "I don't wear black jackets anymore, I'm afraid" statement, as she was sporting the uniform to which she has become so accustomed since 1988.

Her recent performance on the show probably had a lot to do with sluggish sales for her appearance at Symphony Space in New York, which is a much larger venue than the Bottom Line where she played two years ago. On this jaunt, which was a similar "world domination" tour, Tanita had all the fixin's for a major mainstream breakthrough: tour programs, sweatshirts, and t-shirts with a giant print of her face. One lady next to me held her new t-shirt up and stated, "There. I'm going to wear this all the time because I am so sick of people saying, 'Who is Tanita Tikaram?'" Wow, we here in "Twist In My Sobriety's" my favorite song land" thought that after two platinum albums and mega-world tours, the young Fiji-Malayan girl would have had that all that jazz settled by now.

Apparently, she didn't, but the crowd at Symphony Space turned out to be



good after all. Tanita breezed onstage to the jumping 'Thus Story In Me,' a song that seemed a bit foolish to start off given the fact that she was quite nervous. The backing band played loud and strong, which made it hard for Tanita's distinctive vocals to be heard. The spirit of the song was lost in the mix, as was the quality of the second song. Fortunately, by the third song, the sound problems were apparently fixed and the show really took off.

Tanita played most of the tracks from her new record *Everybody's Angel*, but on the older material shone more brightly. She dedicated 'World Outside Your Window' to her parents and, subsequently, it was one of her best vocal deliveries of the night. Fine lighting and rich synth orchestrations turned 'From A Cathedral' into the evening's bright hope, while 'Little Sister Leaving Town' received the same treatment. The crowds were a test for security when Tanita strapped on a guitar and broke into 'Twist In My Sobriety,' which was the treat they had all been waiting for. By the climax of this song, the show had vastly improved from its shaky beginnings.

Tanita may have been opting for a mainstream crossover with the pop stylings of her new album, but in the end her individuality saved her from drowning. She played an acoustic version of 'Only The Ones We Love' as an encore, and the song was heard for its simple beauty. By the end of the last track, 'The Elephant,' Tanita's voice and songwriting were seen as her most gifted assets.

Hopefully, those who only caught the *Letterman* performance will believe that Tanita still has a good excuse to give up smoking. The crowd at Symphony Space sure did.

-by Arleen Colone



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**CHRIS CONNELLY** (Continued fr. pg. 33) I'm not really. I'm hyper and excited but not nervous. Since I've never done this spoken word before, and I would like to make it a permanent feature of my repertoire, so we'll see what happens tonight. I'm not nervous cause I don't know what to expect! I mean what's the worse that can happen? I might make an asshole of myself but that wouldn't be the first time!" he laughs merrily. "At least I'm getting free drinks for being an asshole," as he laughs even harder. "And a weekend in New York! Absolutely!"

On the more serious side, Chris claims, "I really admire people like Henry Rollins and Lydia Lunch, I think what they're doing is fuckin' great. I wanted to do that as well. I think what I'm doing tonight is very primal. But I think given the chance I'll be able to expand upon it, and turn it into something longer and better."

This night promises something special. "It's a collection I've chosen from my body of work. Some of my poems are self-perpetuating, some of them were written in the early '80's and I've taken bits and placed them into new poems and things like that. So it's pretty comprehensive collection. There are ten pieces all joined together for one long piece, from '82 to '91, nine years of verse. It's a best of, it's a greatest hits and nobody's ever hear any of my hits yet!" he exclaims with a grin.

His poetic performance definitely confuses the audience, the DJ bringing a Nine Inch Nails song to an abrupt halt to announce Chris. "Hey, that's the guy who's with Ministry..." "Isn't he with the Cocks?" "What's

he doing? Is he gonna sing?" The comments wash throughout the audience as Chris launches into an impassioned reading of his imagery laden works. One person actual had the balls to ask if I was really enjoying this stuff. Once the ringing tone of Chris' accent fled the air the audience returns to dancing while Chris escapes for a drink or two amidst myriad congratulations. And the word asshole never once entered my mind, except with regard to that incredibly ignorant audience member.

In the future, along with the previous mentioned plans Chris looks forward to working with Pigface production man Steve Albini again, wishing that Albini would pick up his guitar anew. For now, Steve A. is in there giving the Alain J. dynasty some fierce competition on the production front. Once more Chicago gives the world killer production instincts along with the some of the mightiest music stalking the earth. Chris, with his Scottish accent, doesn't exactly remind one of Chicago, as he's yet another transplant victim. With a laugh he jests, "It's kind of like a cesspool: once you fall into Chicago you can't crawl out. Once you're there you can't leave. There's nothing particularly great there, it's cold, it's horrible in the summer, it's disgustingly hot, but I can't crawl out, the sides are too slimy!"

Judging from the activity that's crawled out of that Midwest cesspool, whatever's fermenting down in those dark depths should never be exposed to the light of day. It might kill something slimy yet precious yet to be unleashed. Something perversely beautiful can come from that muck. Just one listen to Mr Connelly's work will convince you. **B**

**VENUS BEADS** (Continued fr. pg 23) one point he was into physics. I think he'd play on his computer rather than come out and have a drink."

Robert decided of himself that he is the type that openly speaks his mind and won't be pushed around. He has a great sense of humor and is quite modest and kind of shy; at least that day he was. He usually writes the lyrics and he previously played bass and guitar in a band called Exit Condition.

From seeing their the video for the song 'The Moon is Red' I get the feeling that Venus Beads can be pretty crazy while they are on stage. I wonder if they are into taking more chances on stage with their music. "I think you have to be adventurous," says Robert. "With the songs we play and the arrangements of the songs. I think we stretch in our capabilities and how well we can play."

So far Robert's first trip to New York is going pretty good. "I was expecting (New York) to be more intense. I was expecting it to feel not so at ease. London feels more hectic. (New York) doesn't seem so impressive as London. I think there's something about London, it's so compact. It's on a smaller scale than New York but there's so much in so little space."

One final question. I asked that among the many people involved with the Venus Beads, was anyone they would really like to thank at this point in their careers? Robert immediately declares, "Yea. I'd like to thank Andy Saunders (the manager of Emergo Insight in England) because he came along at the right time. He really turned out to be genuine. He rescued us really." It was definitely an important musical rescue! **B**

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# REVIEWS

## TRIBE AFTER TRIBE

**Tribe After Tribe (Atlantic/Megaforce)**

Not just a band that talks about freedoms and suffering, South Africa's Tribe After Tribe now find itself in America after being attacked for what they believe in: speaking out against apartheid, injustice, and oppression in their native land. Relocating to Los Angeles with help from Amnesty International, vocalist/guitarist Robbi Robb and bassist Robby Whitlaw recruited percussionist P.K. and the result of that wise union can be heard on this tumultuous LP.

Take the best of raw, rampant, emotional vocals, throw in slicing guitars, throbbing bass and the variety of P.K.'s percussion and what you get is a hard, melodic album for people who like to thump to the rhythm. This is an album that can fry notes to a crisp on songs like 'Build a Subway' then hit deep into the musical soul with 'Just For A While' (with a shivering wail of a vocal from R.R.) or the tragic 'The Mode.'

Tribe After Tribe aren't musical novices finding their initial voice. They're a group with experiences behind them to at once bring a chill of reality to their words while creating flat out great music. They don't preach, they don't rant, but they do howl in pain for their native land with their mighty rock and roll voice. A group that works on many different levels that definitely deserve to be heard. Some awesomely soul-stirring sounds are created here!

-Sandra Garcia

## SKIN YARD

**1000 Smiling Knuckles (Cruz Records)**

Have you ever felt like blaming someone for the entire onslaught of Sub Pop bands?

Well, Jack Endino is your man.

Endino has produced virtually every Pacific Northwest, Black Sabbath-loving band on the Sub Pop label - including Soundgarden, Green River, et. al. However, Endino's own band, Skin Yard, has yet to reach the internationally-known status of Mudhoney and/or Soundgarden. Moreover, Skin Yard doesn't even record for Pus Bop, uh, Sub Pop. Ain't that the way.

Regardless of all of this messy "who's recording for which company" stuff, Skin Yard continues to carry out the traditional "Seattle = guitars" sound that they helped to establish in the first place, but is now, in an interesting turn of events, helping to establish them.

1000 Smiling Knuckles is the fourth LP to emerge from the Skin Yard camp and, as expected, is crammed with the powerful guitar crunch (courtesy of virtuoso Endino - you think the guy may have some talent?) one would most likely expect from a

band residing in the lovely emerald city. Tracks such as 'Headswill,' 'Words On Bone,' 'Jezechrist' (turn this baby up to 11), and the winner of the 1991 song-title-of-the-year award 'Psychoriflepowerhypnotized,' will indeed arouse some heavy, aggressive Sub Pop-type memories, but let us keep in mind who influenced who here.

Skin Yard is, quite possibly, the best known band no one's ever heard of.

-Maureen Odell

## BINARY RACE

**Fits and Starts (Emigre)**

So now that you know a little bit about Emigre the magazine, the type house and the fledgling label (go back to the begging of the magazine and read that info, no skipping facts, you lazy sods!) here's one of the releases hitting the streets. Not being the design head that the editor is, I'm taking this for what it ultimately is: music. And the good words are applicable here: this is lively stuff!

Binary Race is by and large the work of Tom Ware: like the guy recorded, programmed, mastered, produced, wrote, did vocals (more like background stuff, really), almost all the instrumentation and probably even took out the garbage! The music, well, it isn't dance, it isn't pop, what the hell it is really doesn't matter except that it sounds good, and Tom knows his production, yes sir! Immaculate! My fave track here is the loony 'No Can Do' with its jumpy jive noises and a brief Patsy Cline sample flashing by that segues into the creepy 'Not Wyoming.' Like going from a street crawling with humanoids to a barren wind-swept, plateau where something nasty lurks. It's a lot of fun. The whole CD's a swirl of abrupt turns down alleys into brave new doorways. (Arty, eh?)

Hey, it's sorta like Japan meets Devo to drop heavy acid with Yello one dark night. Mutant!

-Nick Coniglio

## CONSOLIDATED

**Friendly Fa\$ism (Network/IRS)**

Consolidated are three men from San Francisco who let you know from the start that they are against racism, sexism, homophobia, fascism, ect., and they are asking for things to get better; but they work in an industry that would rather have them do variations of "girl you know it's true, I love you." They deal with contradiction by playing an intriguing blend of industrial dance and hip-hop. Their first album, *The Myth of Rock*, contains hard-edged, in-your-face musical collages that challenged the white male dominated capitalist culture; it's like a companion piece to Public Enemy's *Fear of a Black Planet*.

*Friendly Fa\$ism* pretty much picks up where *The Myth of Rock* left off. The first single off the album, 'Brutal Equation,' is a thumping dance number that laments the conservative nature of the music industry. The subject of vegetarianism and animal rights comes up in 'Meat Kills' and

'The Sexual Politics of Meat,' the latter having writer Carol J. Adams (whose book the song takes its title from) compare meat eating to male dominance. And 'Stones' is about how the public is fooled into accepting such "drugs" as organized religion and oil companies, set over sloppy reggae-based drum patterns.

Consolidated may put themselves up on the progressive soapbox, but they keep enough distance from it so they can comment on it and give the listener enough room to examine it. On 'Dominion' and 'Murder One' they open up the microphone to the audience as an open forum (which they are know to do at their live shows) and receive criticisms from various people who find problems with their political stance; the former from a bible-thumping woman who believes humans were meant to eat meat, and the latter has an African American telling the band that he can't relate to what they're saying.

*Friendly Fa\$ism* contains another batch of brutal, stirring funk-based industrial dance tunes that question authority and proclaim that everyone should respect each other no matter who (or even what) they are. As Consolidated points out on 'Unity of Oppression,' if one group is oppressed, then all groups are oppressed. Word.

-Christopher Krakora

## BIG DRILL CAR

**Batch (Cruz Records)**

In the perfect, idealistic setting of a rock-n-roll utopia, there is no doubt that Big Drill Car would be the representative band.

Based in a suburb of Los Angeles known as Orange County, BDC is nicely distanced from the metal-happy, spandex-clad trolls who are, not only a source of embarrassment, but dominate the So. Cal. music scene.

However, rather than attempt to emulate the overabundance of hairspray-types who memorize the entire Hanoi Rocks back-catalog, BDC, instead, possess their own brilliant sound - a sound which incorporates the energy and intensity of punk rock with a power-pop base, resulting in a glorious explosion of the naughty merging with the nice.

*Batch*, BDC's third release, is a merciless hard rock attack, featuring such amazing tunes as 'In A Hole,' 'Take Away,' 'Crust,' and the great 'Ick,' all of which superbly capture the band's tremendous live aggression much more accurately than last year's *Album/Tape/CD Type Thing*. (A fine endeavor in itself - just a touch smothered production-wise.)

Outstandingly energetic, *Batch* is one of the finest offerings of 1991. Don't you dare miss a batch of the best.

-Maureen Odell

## THE PSYCHEDELIC FURS

**World Outside (Sony/Columbia)**

Well, the Furs did it with *Book of Days* and of course the question is will they do it again with *World Outside*? What the "it" is that they did was

to make an album of Furs songs that combined their flawed polish and crumpled class with the venom and smoke of old and put these elements through a musical garlic press to distill one hell of an album.

And yes, they've done it again.

*World Outside* isn't quite as dramatic as *Book of Days* but no less powerful for it. The trick of the Furs is if you don't enjoy Dick Butler's languid bitter rasp, you probably can't fathom the appeal of the whole Furs experience. Those world weary tones are as pretentious as they come and darkly beautiful for it. Force that voice into shiny movie-friendly pop like in the mid-'80's and the effect is destroyed. Slap it against equally raspy, bitter music on 'Tearing Down' or 'Better Days' and it's the Furs. Cuddle it with languid atonal passages as on 'Valentine' or 'Until She Comes' and it's the Furs. Massage it with quirky melodies and off-key horn lines and it's the Furs glaring magnificently malevolent on 'Sometimes.'

The Furs continue to shine into the '90's. More in focus for allowing themselves to become obsessively unfocused, Richard and the boys continue to make most groups look like mere musical amateurs.

-Sandra Garcia

## THE WHISKEY PRIESTS

**Nee Gud Luck (Whippet)**

My friends, Rob and Julie, tell me that a member of Fairport Convention says that this is the band that "makes The Pogues sound like Weather Report."

Hmm, pretty strong stuff. Normally, I'd answer that sort of blather with a gruff, obscene retort. Like "piss off!" But I'll restrain myself...maybe because the guy could be half-right.

Okay. Enough of the preliminaries. The Whiskey Priests are a sextet from Durham who unleash a torrent of thrash folk that, well, reminds one of The Pogues. Except that where The Pogues show definite rock 'n' roll tendencies, the Whiskey Priests toe a more traditional line. Then again, don't make the mistake of equating "traditional" with staid or conventional.

Led by the brothers Miller, Gary on lead vocals and guitar/bouzouki/mandolin, and Glenn, accordion and backing vocals, the Priests employ traditional instruments such as fiddles and pipes, as well as an electric bass and drums to provide the band with that extra "oomph" which really makes their songs kick ass.

Just listen to songs like the rousing instrumentals 'Rising Of The North' and 'Spring-Heeled Jacks' or 'Streets Paved With Gold,' 'Collier's Rant,' 'Dol-Li-A,' 'Halcyon Days' and 'The Durham Light Infantry.' And 'Jenny Grey' is the best song Shane MacGowan never wrote.

Songs about the mines, shipyards, pressgangs, soldiers that never came back and pining for a woman's love. Gary Miller's voice is appropriately rough-hewn, sounding like he spent

a lifetime in the coal mines of Blighty.

The only complaint has to do with the production, it's a bit tinny and Miller's vocals could have been turned up a bit. But those are the only complaints. The playing's hot, tight and the songs are delivered with great elan.

The Whisky Priests have all the earmarks of being "The Next Big Thing" folk/rock-wise. They deserve to be heard by millions.

-Brian Greenlee

## THE CAVEDOGS

### *Joyrides for Shut-ins (Capitol)*

I am so lame.

How could I have been so idiotic as to completely miss The Cavedogs brilliant *Joyrides For Shut-Ins* when it was originally released (by Restless/Enigma) back in mid-1990?

Fortunately, (for slowpokes like me), Capitol Records has decided to re-release this Boston trio's wonderful, debut effort so that I too now know that *Joyrides For Shut-Ins* contains all of the irresistible ingredients of which charming, yet churning, pop music dreams are made of.

Though they do ride on the same jangling, melodic, '60's-guitar laden popmobile as Seattle flower boys The Posies, and L.A.-based guppies School of Fish, The Cavedogs incorporate shades of Marshall Crenshaw and House of Freaks into their sound, creating a slightly more raw feel to their debut effort than either of the fine aforementioned bands.

Tracks such as 'Tayter Country,' 'Proud Land,' 'Calm Him Down,' 'Taking Up Space,' and 'Leave Me Alone' are only a few of the exceptional excursions to be experienced on The Cavedogs popmobile.

Don't be late like some people (me), hitch a joyride NOW!

-Maureen Odell

## THE STOATERS

### *Laboring Under The Illusion*

Has North America finally produced a band that combines Celtic-flavored roots with the punk attitude of music ala The Pogues or The Men They Couldn't Hang? A band that can combine pipes, mandolins, bodhrans, accordions, guitars and drums, a sneer and tongue in cheek?

Yep. It looks that way. Ladies and gentlemen: introducing The Stoaters. The quintet hails from Vancouver and, if this five-song cassette is any indication, The Stoaters band should be the next big thing roots/folk-rockwise or whatever the hell you want to call it.

Five songs of thumping roots rock with a touch of the Old Sod that keeps you on your feet and your ears aching for more:

'A Man Alone,' 'Navigator' (with its haunting keyboards and Dennis Crews' rough-hewn vocals), 'Col. Mung's Reel' (a traditional foot-stomper), '21 Years' and 'Crooked Hand Jack' (a spirited jab at the reigning politician in British Columbia).

The playing's spirited, from Crews' mandolin and tin whistle to Doug

Schmidt's accordion, Rob Ford's guitar, Dale O'Sullivan's drums and Robert Baptie's bass. The sound quality is terrific for an independently produced tape, even on the live cut, 'Crooked Hand Jack.'

One gets the feeling that this is just the tip of the iceberg and that The Stoaters have a hell of a lot more to offer. Someone better snap these guys up. Now.

-Brian Greenlee

## SPRINGHOUSE

### *Land Falls (Caroline)*

Listening to this debut album from this three-piece outfit from New York, you get the impression that this

sounds like these guys are greatly influenced by early '80's neo-psychedelic bands from Liverpool such as Echo & the Bunnymen and the Teardrop Explodes. And they use those influences well. A deep, powerful and expansive guitar sound prevails on such cuts as 'Again', and the songwriting is quite melodic, such as on the ringing 'Layers.' (Plus there's also the fact that lead singer Mitch Friedland bears a strange vocal resemblance to Julian Cope!)

Springhouse thankfully also shows that they are capable of more than just emulating the Liverpool gang. 'Eyesore' is built around a jagged bassline that sounds almost funky

'Eskimo' (which tackles the subject of how homeless people have to endure the cold weather during winter) shows a more straight-forward punky side, and is one of the two songs where drummer Jack Rabid sings lead vocal.

*Land Falls* shows that while Springhouse may be based on early '80's psychedelia, they are smart enough to have their own identity. If you like British tinged guitar pop, then may I suggest you pick this release up. This is bold and impressive music from this promising band.

-Christopher Krakora

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# R REVIEWS

## HOT SHOTS

-By Carol Schutzbank

Welcome, welcome one and all. Time for another exciting installment of "Hot Shots"- your ticket to some cool and groovy listening tips. So settle in, read on and let's get moving: **WALKING WOUNDED** *Hard Times*- Optimism tempered by hard experience. The Walking Wounded are purveyors of folk-rock but with a spiritual gospel swing (don't miss 'Sweet Redemption,' a truly moving song). There's an occasional nod towards punk (more in spirit than in actual style) that lends the music some bite and balance. (*Dr. Dream, 60 Plaza Square, Orange, CA 92666*)... **BILLYCHILDS** *His April Touch*- Like a cool waterfall, Child's music invigorates and titillates the senses, displaying as many mercurial facets. The overall style is jazz, but it's played with a soaring abandon. (*Windham Hill Jazz, 3500 W. Olive Ave, Suite 1430, Burbank, CA 91505*)... **THE WEIRDOS** *Weird World 1977 - 1981*- Hi-jinxin' hurly burly rock music with metal/punk's beefiness but not weighed down by it. In fact, the band is dexterously delirious about it—they go for the gusto (*Frontier, POB 22, Sun Valley, CA 91353*)... **BOBBO** *I'm Not Valentine*- Straightforward pop, likeable and well delivered, but with a hint of something restlessly energetic underneath. That movement gives the songs an energized depth which the vocals latch on to and push. (*Spitfire Records, POB 1837, NY, NY 10009*)... **FUNERAL PARTY** *Funeral Party*- Ominous vocals stop just short of pretentiousness to hang shrouded above the danceably dark rock music. The songs follow in the tradition of bands like Echo & The Bunnymen, but they don't stick 100% to the path. (*Soundbox Records, 345 Riverside Drive, 6A, NY, NY 10025*)... **JAW BOX** *Grippe*- Pretty straight-up hardcore inspired rock and roll with some nice swirling guitar work. The lyrics convey a bleak outlook but the music conveys the optimistic thought that all hope isn't lost yet. (*Dischord, 3819 Beecher St, NW, WDC, 20007*)...

**JOHN CALE** *Even Cowgirls Get The Blues*- Recorded live over a 2-night period at CBGB's around the holidays, this is for anyone who wonders why there's all the nostalgia

over the early days of no wave/new wave music. This stuff is charged with an anything is possible attitude and a cool, hip, funky spirit. It's whiskey soaked and cigarette smoldered, then smoked tortuously over artistic angst. (*ROIR, 611 Broadway, #411, NYC, NY 10012*)... **ANDY DAVIS** *Clevedon Pier*- Sensitive compelling music mixing old celtic influences with warm, rich pop. The feel is like a glowing tapestry that envelopes you in its folds. (*Relativity, 187-07 Henderson Avenue, Hollis, NY 11423*)... **JOE PASQUALE** *Prey*- Moody introspective pop pumped with a keen ear for A-O-R accessibility. Joe manages to sound honest and endearing even as he slicks up for the commercial mainstream. (*MCA*)... **DENNIS BROWN** *Victory*- Uplifting, strong lyrical material from a talented artist. (Brown has been headlining the US Sunsplash tour.) Smooth and yet stirring. (*RAS, POB 42517, WDC, 20015*)... **ANACRUSIS** *Manic Impressions*- Rensch actually had this on the stereo when I swiped it out and yanked it for my column. True, they're not The Goo Goo Dolls or Johnny Law, but neither are they the Lizzy Borden. Anacrusis defy description—they're hard rock metal with bite, they're flamboyant, they're power rock and yet they're not watered down to meet A-O-R expectations. They play around with all of the above and then play some more. A quality release. (*Metal Blade, 18653 Ventura Blvd, Ste. 311, Tarzana, CA*)...

**STUART HAMM** *The Urge*- He's played with the likes of Steve Vai and Joe Satriani and he's won many musical awards. Here he struts his stuff in a confident, competent, sometimes sassy manner. Hamm is at his best when the instruments to the talking—the vocals impede rather than enhance the effort. (Basically they just seem as if they don't fit into the scheme of things—the music creates mood and energy and the vocals seem lost.) (*Relativity*)... **VARIOUS ARTISTS** *IRS Greatest Hits Volume 4: The Remixes*- Hunters & Collectors, Caterwaul, General Public, Ranking Roger, Belinda Carlisle and Jane Weidlin are among the better known offerings here. Unlike previous IRS comps which have emphasized a harder collection—focusing on rock and punk—this comp is pure dance. Mixes and remixes keep your ears energized and your feet happy. Of note to fans and collectors. Many of the extended remixes won't be found

anywhere else. (*IRS, 594 Broadway, #901, NYC, NY 10012*)... **VARIOUS ARTISTS** *Spank the Nun (A Devil's Dozen From Skyclad)*- This is one label that rarely disappoints when it comes to comps—both their titles and their selection of artists is on target. This batch serves up some strong stuff, be it brisk and catchy from Hand of Glory, coked-up country from The Krewmen, gloriously grungey from Union Carbide Productions, or just plain fun from Go To Blazes. Well worth your time and spins in the stereo. (*Skyclad, POB 666, Middlesex, NJ 08846*)... **VARIOUS ARTISTS** *Cuba Classics 2. Dancing With The Enemy*- There's something almost magical about good Cuban music—fiery, mercurial, poignant—that touches on a molten core of nerves and emotion without ever shameless tugging on it. This release is a wonderful introduction for those who have never experienced Cuban music before, and a strong addition to the collections of those who have. (*Luaka Bop/Sire*)... **THE MOVIE STARS** *Head On A Platter*- Eclectic, witty folk music sprinkled with a kitchen's sink full of references, such as back porch twang, zydeco, soul and rock. In the tradition of the Pogues, but The Stars are more carefree and lively with the style, playing music that is irresistibly kicky. (*Whirlaway, 2261 Market St., SF, CA 94114*)...

**GOODBYE MR. MACKENZIE** *Goodbye Mr. Mackenzie*- Imagine Neal Diamond in his heyday singing with The Simple Minds in their heyday. Now toss in a dash of Lou Reed and the Velvets just to keep it interesting. Weird though this may sound, it really does work. Trust me. The band plays mellow, rich, and yet passionate and committed music that manages to encompass facets from all the aforementioned artists without ever once damaging their integrity or their talent. (*Radioactive Records/MCA*)... **ANDY PRIEBOY** *Montezuma Was A Man Of Faith*- This second offering from Prieboy continues in the firmly eclectic trail blazed previously with *Upon My Wicked Son*. Once again no style is untackable, no topic untouchable as he trips the light fantastic with pop, rock, dance, and a host of other off-beat influences. (*Dr. Dream, 841 E. Collins, Orange, CA 92666*)... **THE BLACK SUN ENSEMBLE** *Tragic Magic*- Semi-mystical music, part acoustic part electric that touches on a primitive, powerful chord. Equal parts contemporary hard rock, ethnic Indian rhythms and new age ambience. (*Absolute A Go Go, POB 187, Oakland, NJ 07436*)... **DOWN BY LAW** *Down By Law*- It's tempting to go into a history of the members—which includes such notables as Dag Nasty and Chemical People—but time and space are of the essence. Honest, no pretensions music that's fun to listen to—almost as fun as it seems to play it. Part punk, part guitar-led pop, part bubblegum music. (*Epitaph, 6201 Sunset Blvd,*

*Suite 111, Hollywood, CA 90028*)... **ANASTASIA SCREAMED** *15 Seconds or 5 Days*- This 5-song EP/CD finds the band's music harder, raunchier and blues-ier. Much more so than their last outing. Imagine T Rex, and the Rolling Stones crashing headline into Jane's Addiction and The Cult. (*Fire, POB 800, Rockville Centre, NY 11571*)... **DAMIEN DAME** *Damien Dame*- A lively mix of hip hop and funk served up with smooth assured polish, soulful r&B touches and an acute awareness of the MTV generations's appreciation of flair and style. (*La Face/Polygram*)... **SAFFIRE THE UPPITY BLUES WOMEN** *Hot Flash* I could spend the entire column—hell, the entire magazine—rhapsodizing about these women. They're that good. Saucy, sassy, sophisticated, they tell it like it is. Lyrically they could almost be C&W—save for the swing in the voice that lets you know that this ain't no heartbroken country gal—this is a red hot mamma with blood running through her veins. The music is by turns lively, punchy, and seductive, and more than a match for the singers. (*Alligator, POB 60234, Chicago, IL 60660*)... **THE LESLIE SPIT TRIO** *Don't Cry Too Hard*- The name reminds me of what I used to make up as a kid for a band, gimmicky and sort of kitschy. Fortunately their music is exactly the opposite. Rich, lusty country rock belted out with the conviction of a country crooner backed with the rollicking force of a rock and roll band. (*IRS*)...

**THE FAT LADY SINGS** *Twist*- A bizarre—but cool—name for a band. Comparisons will undoubtedly be made to The Waterboys—the band follows in that Irish pop/celtic roots style, but Fat Lady has a heartier, more rock oriented sound. (*Atlantic*)... **GUMBALL** *Special Kiss*- Yet another Rensch near-miss. (I keep slipping them away.) Twin/Tone, AmRep, SubPop are all floating around as label references for this band. Industrial style music with lots of fuzz and feedback, wild wailing guitar and dark driven catchy melodies, pumped up with a powerful delivery. (*Primo Scree, 114 W. 26th, NYC, NY 10001*)... **MIKE FREEMAN AND SPELLBOUND** *Street Shuffle*- Now here's contrast, to go from Gumball to this. Easy, breezy, jazz-oriented instrumentals with a light airy touch. The keyboards, vibraphone and marimba all flow nicely, powered by the guitar, bass and drums. (*Best Recordings, Old York Rd, Elmhurst, IL, 60126*)... **JAMES MORRISON** *Snappy Doo*- Certainly this is jazz influenced, but it's really more reminiscent of big band music with its pizzazz and style and swing. Very pleasant and enjoyable. (*Atlantic Jazz*)... **BRAD JONES** *Gilt Flake*- Very Beatles-esque in its charm, particularly closest to some of the offerings from George Harrison. Lively and chipper guitar based pop which rolls along in an extremely likeable manner. (*No address*)... **MENTAL INSECT** *Skull Tracks*- They take the



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3. **APR/MAY 87—LOVE & ROCKETS:** Interviews: Love & Rockets, Gene Loves Jezebel Pt. 2, Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, The Lucy Show, Concrete Blonde, Hunters & Collectors.

4. **JUN/JUL 87—PETER MURPHY:** Interviews: Peter Murphy, The Fall, The Chameleons, The Dead Milkmen, Soul Asylum, The Feelies, Schoolly D.

5. **AUG/SEPT 87—THE MISSION:** Interviews: The Mission, Cult, The Mekons, Meatpuppets, Strangers, Anthrax, Mighty Lemon Drops, D.O.A., Lene Lovich, Flesh for Lulu.

6. **OCT/NOV 87—WIRE:** Interviews: Wire, Skinny Puppy, Coil, Fuzzbox, Cassandra Complex, Billy Idol/Gen X.

7. **DEC 87/JAN 88—GENE LOVES JEZEBEL:** Interviews: Gene Loves Jezebel, Echo and the Bunnymen, New Order, Db's, Jello Biafra, Silencers, Waterboys.

8. **FEB/MAR 88—THE BOLSHOI:** Interviews: The Bolshoi, Alarm, Gene Loves Jezebel Pt. 2, Cabaret Voltaire, Live Skull, Alex Chilton, Lime Spiders, Scram, Armored Saint.

9. **APR/MAY 88—FLESH FOR LULU:** Interviews: Flesh For Lulu, Sonic Youth, Front 242, Game Theory, Xymox, Fields of the Nephilim, Exodus, Zodiac Mindwarp, Leather Nun, Lions and Ghosts, Legendary Pink Dots.

10. **JUN/JUL 88—ROBIN HITCHCOCK:** Interviews: Robin Hitchcock, Grapes of Wrath, Splatcats, Wild Seeds, Original Sins, The Gun Club, Swans, Throwing Muses, The Mission. Live: Peter Murphy, Love & Rockets.

11. **AUG/SEPT 88—LOVE & ROCKETS/PETER MURPHY:** Interviews: Peter Murphy, Love & Rockets, Mojo Nixon, Thin White Rope, Gaye Bykers On Acid, Godfathers, Screaming Trees (UK), Woodentops, Wall of Voodoo.

12. **OCT/NOV 88—SUGARCUBES:** Interviews: Sugarcubes, Wire Pt. 1, Christian Death, Camper Van Beethoven, Meatpuppets, Tackhead, Icehouse, Passion Fodder, The EX, House of Freaks, Band of Susans.

15. **JUN/JUL 89—NEW MODEL ARMY:** Interviews: New Model Army, Julian Cope, That Petrol Emotion, Laibach, Sonic Youth, Allen Sex Fiend, Danielle Dax, Easterhouse, Ofra Haza, Ministry Pt. 2, Mofungo, Thin White Rope, Proclaimers, Hugo Largo, Dinosaur, Jr., Electric Love Muffin.

16. **AUG/SEPT. 89—THE FALL:** Interviews: The Fall, Love and Rockets, Adrian Belew, Naked Raygun, Public Image Ltd., Live Skull, Yello, Marc Almond, G.G. Allin, Drivin' Cryin', Throwing Muses, Dogs D'Amour.

17. **OCT / NOV 89—MATT JOHNSON (THE THE):** Interviews: Matt Johnson, Pogues, Fetchin' Bones, My Bloody Valentine, Henry Rollins, D. D. Ramone, Moev, Killdozer, Bill Drummond, Sarah McLachlan, Crazyhead, Xymox.

18. **DEC 89/ JAN 90—THE B-52'S:** Interviews: The B-52's, Mike Scott of The Waterboys, Pixies, XTC, Pylon, Caterwaul, Mary My Hope, Gavin Friday, Lemonheads, PopWill Eat Itself, Live: Love & Rockets, The Cure.

19. **FEB / MAR 90—PETER MURPHY:** Interviews: Peter Murphy, Deborah Harry, Sugarcubes, Wonder Stuff, Happy Mondays, Billy Bragg, Vol Vod, Fuzztones, Exene, Hoodoo Gurus, Front Line Assembly.

20. **APR / MAY 90—THE CREATURES:** Interviews with The Creatures, The Psychedelic Furs, KMFD, Camper Van Beethoven, Allen Sex Fiend, Shelleyan Orphan, The Oyster Band, Poi Dog Pondering.

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23. **OCT/ NOV. 90—GENE LOVES JEZEBEL:** Interviews with Gene Loves Jezebel, The Church, Hunters and Collectors, The Sundays, Nitzer Ebb, Anna Domino, Loop, That Petrol Emotion, Robert Plant, Big Dipper.

24. **DEC 90/ JAN 91—SKINNY PUPPY:** Interviews with Skinny Puppy, Sonic Youth, Living Color, The Breeders, Jesus Jones, The Associates, The Darling Buds, Bel Canto, Robert Plant (Pt. 2), John Doe, Exclusive Reading Festival report, and Live: Revolting Cocks.

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27. **JUN / JUL 91—JESUS JONES:** Interviews: Jesus Jones, Ride, Goo Goo Dolls, Killing Joke, Kitchens of Distinction, Front Line Assembly, Urban Dance Squad, Tanita Tikaram, Limbomaniacs, Skinner Box, Live: Sisters of Mercy, Pigface, INXS.

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# REVIEWS

melodrama of goth, the power of metal, the thickness of industrial and the poignancy of ethnic music, and draw on it all to create a sound uniquely their own. That they do it well enough not to sound derivative at all is a mark of the burgeoning talent this band has. (*Pterandon Ltd. Editions/Public I*, 928 Broadway, Suite 1102, NYC, NY 10010)... **HARM FARM** *Nice Job, Einstein*- They're back with a follow-up to the critically acclaimed debut, *Spawn*. Once again we're treated to quirky, intelligent, no punches pulled observations on what's going on out there, backed with an eclectically influenced folk style that's engagingly charming. (*Alias*, 374 Brannan St, SF, CA 94107)... **HAMMERBOX** *Hammerbox*- Theirs is a big bawdy sound: singer Carrie Akre's voice soars out, bold and powerful, like a cross between a torch-song crooner and a rock and roll diva; the music is thick and crunchy with feedback, heavy chords, jangly melodies and punchy rhythms. (*C/Z Records*, 1407 East Madison, #41, Seattle, WA 98122)

## RENCH ROCK

-By Rench

Yoyoyoyoyo! And, hey, by the way, did I mention YO? Check it out, dudes... While you're lazine' around the summer here are some way cool

tunes from some way hot bands... **THE BANG GANG** *Love Sells*- Originally from Seattle, WA, but not the Seattle of Soundgarden and Mudhoney... we're talking more the Seattle of Alice in Chains here. Big fucking thrills galore on this roller coaster ride of a release. Like KISS--fun, glammy, catchy, bigger 'n' life and rowdy, crossed with T-Rex to bring it all home. (*Sinclair Recs*, 6 Greene St, 2nd Fl, NYC, NY 10013)... **R.D.P.** *Anarkophobia*- Ratos De Porao is their name and musical insanity is their game. *Brasil* kicked ass in a big way and this one fuckin' follows it up... Totally strong, ballsy, thrashcore with a ferociously big sound. These guys tape into this primitive fury and passion that's awesome. (*R/C*, 225 Lafayette St, #709, NYC, NY 10012)... **GREAT WHITE** *Hooked*- Rebel rocking music. It sounds like Led Zep dipped in AC/DC. The dudes have mastered the groove thang and certainly know how to shriek. Plus they got a bad assed party attitude to give it all a lift. (*Capitol*)... **ISM** *I Think I Love You* (*The Hits That Missed 1982-1989*)- Totally fucking crazy punk. Anarchy and humor rule side by side with songs like 'I Think I Love You' (and check out the cover art that shit inspires, man), 'John Hinkley Jr.' and 'Bed Pan Hunting' how can you go wrong??... **SILVERFISH** *Fat Axl*- Like some bastard child of a Wax Trax orgy possessed by demons, Silverfish spins circles round the stereo system like a rabid dog chasin' its tail... A wild frenzied thick crunchy

industrial fuzzed out haze of wailing guitar, growling satanic vocals and pounding rhythm. (*Touch & Go*, POB 25520, Chicago, IL 60625)... **SAIGON KICK** *Saigon Kick*- Hmmm... an interesting mix of punk thrash and power ballad metal. When it works (most of the time) it's cool... there were only a few times when hey, it just didn't jive right. Yeah, it needs to flow better. (*Third Stone/Atlantic*)... **SLOPPY SECONDS** *Where Eagles Dare*- With a guest appearance by Bobby Steele on guitar and vocals, this is their fifth release. It's a big ole splash of icy cold beer in yer face, wakes up your tired ole ears with a big sloppy wet kiss. Super, energetic, ultra- catchy hardcore shit you just gotta love. (*Roadkill Records*, POB 477175, Chicago, IL 60647)... **HALL AFLAME** *Guaranteed Forever*- Kurdt Vanderhoof of Metal Church fame steps out with a new project--sort of Motorhead crossed with Lynyrd Skynyrd polished up to a clean ole shine with a dash of A-O-R Bon Jovialness. The music is loud 'n proud, scratchy round the edges but still smooth enough for MTV, natch. (*IRS*, 3939 Lankershim Blvd., Universal City, CA 91604)... **HEATHEN** *Victims of Deception*- Ultra heavyweight speed metal with killer nimble guitar work. Like Ali, this shit floats like a butterfly and stings like a big ole bee. (*Roadracer*, 225 Lafayette St, #709, NYC, NY 10012)...

**SEPULTURA** *Arise*- From the depths of the Brazilian jungle comes the granddaddy of 'em all. We're talk-

ing slices and dices like a fucking Ginzu knife... neat clean and SHARP. Precise to a fucking "T". And *power!* More power than a room full of uzis. (*R/C*)... **GRINDER** *Nothing is Sacred*- It's got a speed metal base, but the band pushes it around at it, kicking it and pulling it with bits of rhythm and funky shit. They've got a fierce execution and tons of passion--enough to ignite a dozen A-bombs at least. (*Noise Intl.*, 5 Crosby Street, NYC, NY 10013)... **RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED** *Kick Happy, Thrill Hungry, Reckless & Willing*- Total party punk music... This group has fun even as they're going crazy with the music into the concert hall stratosphere in the sky. (*Noise Intl.*)... **VARIOUS ARTISTS** *Grind Crusher*- JEEEEEEZ-ZZZUUUUUUSSSS. Fasten your seatbelts, dudes and dudettes, it's going to be a hellious ride. A collection of killers here, with the likes of Godflesh, Napalm Death, Carcass, Morbid Angel, Mighty Force and more all joining force to kick butt in a big way with their music. Over 20 bands pushing the audio limits in their personal quest for musical intensity, power, or both! Fucking awesome... a definite Rench classic. Double beers for all! (*Combat/Earache*, 187-07 Henderson Ave, Hollis, NY 11423)... **WARRIOR** *Fighting for the Earth*- Originally released in '85, this has been remixed and remastered as part of the Blade's classic series. And it is totally classic... A big sweaty melodic in-yer-face metal sound belted out like an nasty anthem. Way to go... (*Metal Blade*, 18653 Venture Blvd, #311, Tarzana, CA 91356)... **WHITE LION** *More Attraction*- Aaaaaayyyyyyyyye. Break out the beers and let's tailgate to the show. We're talking classic arena rock. The big shit, the major cheese, the head boff here. Top o' the line Bics alight, arms a' swinging and swaying power metal classic pop stuff. But watch out, dudes. The sneaky bass snaps up some cool funky shit that'll grab you by the balls if you're not careful... (*Atlantic*)... **BATON ROUGE** *Lights Out in the Playground*- Aaaaaaooooooowwwwww... Boy oh boy, the last time ole Rench here heard shit like this he was bangin' and boppin' to Def Leppard, Quiet Riot, Twisted Sister and Ratt. The Rouge dudes make that big joyous rocked out totally spirited party metal sound. Ya knows what I'm talking about--total anthem power, outrageous attitude, bluesy, ballsy, shit kicking polished and completely passionate. (*East/West*, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, NY, NY 10019)... **MR. BIG** *Lean Into It*- Woooah, Mr. Big Stuff... Just who the fuck do you think you are... One listen to this platter and you'll know who they fuck they are--Mr. Big emerges out of the pack to really clinch a name for themselves. Big and brassy and bold and bitchin', the band is essentially pure-d rock and roll, but they bust ass tearing into it in a big way. (*Atlantic*)... **LOUDNESS** *On the Prowl*- I kept listening waiting from something original to smack me upside the head, but it

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never happened. Still, these dudes are so good it's hard to get really pissed off at 'em. They got the licks, chops and leads down pat and their songs fucking fly banner high. Total pumpmanship and the musicians shred first rate. (Atco)... **ENUFF Z'NUFF** *Strength*- It's like they dragged Elvis Costello back through a time warp into the 70's--total rowdiness, rockin' and rollin'. They're definitely a mean scream and a Rench fun pick--but they just ain't got that certain something that sends 'em soaring into a Rench classic, ya know? (Atco)...

**MALEVOLENT CREATION** *The Ten Commandments*- Yo, do these guys live up to their name--nasty, furious, almost neck breaking they push the speed barrier so hard. It's death metal that's slogged through the sludge and grime for a real gritty thick sound. (R/C)... **ATROCITY** *Hallucinations*- Hard- hitting melodies and message mix together for a killer release. It's a concept LP about a dude who kicks the bucket od'ing on smack. Strong shit to take but the music backs it up punch for punch and rams the message down yer throat home. (R/C)... **THE COWS** *Peacetika*- They're baaaaaacccckkk. Those gloriously grimy gleefully grungy bad boyz o' noiz are back and AH LUVS EM. They manage to sound completely warped and totally know-it-all smartass, but they do it with this big ole shit-eating

grin as though they're innocent as a newborns ass. Total industrial strength rock and roll--you gotta love 'em. (Amphetamine Reptile, 2541 Nicolet Ave S, Mnpls, MN 55401)... **HUL-LABALOO** *Lubritarium*- Yo! Been a long time since I've heard all out party punk music like this. Totally killer. Heavy no holds barred hardcore psycho metal billy party music with lots 'o fuzz, throb, wails and yowls. And a gigantic "fuck you" attitude that spills all over the place. Tight and totally on, they band plays like some juggernaut on overdrive headed right for your face. (C/Z 1407 E. Madison, #41, Seattle, WA 98122)... **SAXON** *Solid Ball of Rock*- Fuckin' A, man--this is their TENTH studio album and they're still roaring out like nobody's business. Carrying on the metal torch with a whiz-bang. Ballsy rock that kicks up its heels to party! (Charisma, 1790 Broadway, 20th Floor, NYC, NY 10019)... **TUFF** *What Comes Around Goes Around*- Bring it all home, dudes... Cliche rock at its finest?? The boyz do it up right: power ballads, beefy choruses, flamboyant guitar leads, punchy rhythms. Ultra flamboyance. (Atlantic)... **SACRIFICE** *Soldiers of Misfortune*- No shit given, no shit taken. No nonsense. No holds barred. Hard thrash meets hard metal in a furious explosion of nasty music. (Metal Blade)... **DANGEROUS TOYS** *Hellacious Acres*- A cool fucking promo accompanied this: my very own deed

to a piece of *Hellacious Acres*. The Toys are like some scruffy scrappy kin to AC/DC--a jammin' party on wheels. Rock and roll, dudes! (Columbia)... **KIX** *Hot Wire*- Another branch of the AC/DC family tree, this one glammed up and hot to trot. Kix teases the sound higher and higher, building into killer voltage energy. (Concrete / East/West)... **THE BOGEYMEN** *There's No Such Thing As...*- Take ex-Masters of Reality guitarist & songwriter Tim Harrington and ex-MoR drummer Vinnie Ludovico, toss in ex-805 bassist Creamo Liss, and keyboardist George Rossi. Straight-up hard rock with a grinding funk rhythm to it and a real fuckin' fresh attitude. (Concrete/ Delicious Vinyl, 6607 Sunset Blvd., LA, CA 90028)... **BOLT THROWER** *Realm of Chaos*- Thunderously good shit. This actually goes before their Warmaster release. It was originally an import and now fans can get it domestically. Thick, grinding death-core metal you can really sink your rotten teeth into. (Relativity/ Earache)... **CLAW HAMMER** *Ger Yer Za Za Out*- Originally performed live on Andrea 'Enthal's "Twelve O'Clock Rock" show in LA. Total raw rowdy rock and roll. Guitar heavy with a wild, shit kicking vocal style. (Trigon, 6837 Hanna Ave, Canoga Park, CA 91303)... **SKYCLAD** *The Wayward Sons of Mother Earth*- Primarily thrash music but there are some radical twists--like the way cool violin and

folky celtic shit on 'The Widdershins Jig'--that let's you know there's more than meets the eyeball here. Formed by ex-Sabbath vocalist Martin Walkyier and Parrish guitarist Steve Ramsey. (Noise Intl.)... **TYKETTA** *Don't Come Too Easy*- Big bawdy fuckin' music in the spirit of Aerosmith but with the gloss of Journey and the easy manner of Huey Lewis (if ya can imagine such a combo). Pretty boy rock with a bad boy attitude. (David Geffen Company)... **BULLETBOYS** *Freakshow*- Whiskey soaked glam rock that's rough and tumbled and sassy. They attempt total wildness in the worst way, but don't achieve it 100%--more like 92%. (Warner Bros)... **BIG CHIEF** *Drive It Off*- Metallic rock-n-roll put through maximum psychedelic overdrive. Sloppy and aggressive and grungy and melodic. (Get Hip, POB 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317)... **IRON PROSTATE** *Loud, Fast And Aging Rapidly*- Man, you gotta love the fuckin' title of this slab. Soo very coool. And the music ain't half bad either. Take some of CCR, some early Fleetwood Mac and then toss 'em up with heavy duty Motorhead. This shit has muscle, folks, but it's not afraid to play around with pop and sort of down-home stuff, too. Good good good--a great way to round off from the Rench. (Scream'n' Skull, POB 666, Middlesex, NJ 08846)

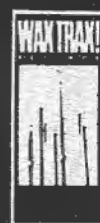
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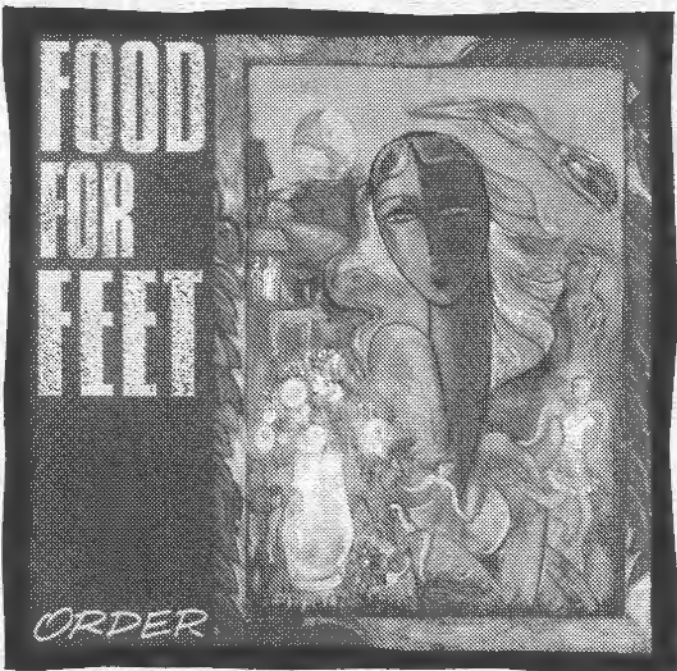
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## THE CORE REPORT

-By Brian Greenlee

**SACRED HEART OF CRUST-**Grungy, dense excursion with a steady heavy beat and hailing (apparently) from the Lone Star State. At times, this Spot-produced thang sounds a bit like Lard, or Arsenal with decipherable vocals. Side two is the stronger, with 'Chemical Pattie' (with its supplication to the Almighty for Divine Intervention regarding a certain laxative) and 'Black Tuesday' the standouts. Yee hah! (*Trance Syndicate*)

**TYPE "O" NEGATIVE** *Slow, Deep, and Hard-* Now here's a laugh riot. Peter, former frontman for those happy guys Carnivore is back with another foray into hatred and violence featuring infidelity, rape, vengeance, etc. In other words, just another day at the office. Musically, not bad at all: crunch/ core/ metal with plenty of punch. Lyrically, yeah, well the less said the better. Come to think of it, the lead track, 'Unsuccessfully Coping With The Natural Beauty of Infidelity,' does have a catchy refrain: "I know you're fucking someone else." Ah, culture... (*Roadracer*)

**LEFT INSANE** *Tool Box-* From a punky SoCal trio, this record has its moments. But not enough of them. Too many instrumentals featuring wanking guitar solos that go nowhere. The band fares better with the short'n sweet blast of power in the lead-off cut, 'Neck Deep.' Unfortunately, that's about it. (*Nemesis*)

**ALICE DONUT** *Mule-* New Yorkers with a firm grasp on reality, Big Apple style. To wit: 'Mother Of Christ,' 'Roaches In The Sink,' 'My Severed Head,' 'Bottom Of The Chain,' 'Burlesque,' 'Tiny Ugly World' and 'J Train Downtown: A Nest Of Murder.' The sound alternates between frenzied and poppy. Perfect music to listen to while flipping through the pages of the *New York Post* or *Weekly World News*. (*Alternative Tentacles*)

**CHRISTIAN LUNCH** *Unreliable Sources-* According to the liner notes of 'Let 'em Eat Jellybeans,' Lunch went on a self-imposed exile to Germany to sit out the Reagan Reich. Don't know if he's returned since we've entered the Bush League. Be that as it may, *Unreliable Sources* is a nice slice of techno-pop terrorism. Lunch fares better in the swirling dance beat ala Ministry and Pailhead on the A Side's three songs. It's no wonder, since the EP was remixed by Luxa/Pan of Wax Trax fame. The long rap on Side B, 'Drug Squad (American Version),' is an attempt at funk which doesn't quite make it. Lunch's voice is decent enough and the can turn a phrase, especially on 'Lynch Me' and 'Neighborhood Watch.' All in all, not a bad record. (*Alternative Tentacles*)

**BLITZSPEER** *Blitzspeer Live-* Seven-song blast of core/metal brew from Noo Yawk. Yup, these guys are on a sonic search and destroy mis-

sion. 'City Boy,' 'Sonic Glory,' 'Sky High' and 'Race To Win' crunch and stomp along at a good clip. Kinda reminiscent of the Cro-Mags. They also cover 'Kick Out The Jams.' Great sound quality for a live recording. (*Epic*)

**THE PICKETTS** 'Should I Stay Or Should I Go?' b/w 'Walkin' Talkin' Jukebox & Fallin' For You'- Yessir, a country and western version of the Clash hit from *Combat Rock*. And it sounds damn fine to boot. No real surprise, given the Strummer/Jones affinity for rockabilly stylings. Singer Christy McWilson gives the song a great country twang and the playing is pretty hot too. The flip side's okay, but the real treat is hearing the "Only Band That Matters" reinterpreted. A must get. (*Popllama*)

## JUST A DOPE BEAT

-By C.J. Krakora

**UNITY 2** *What Is It, Yo?-* Sean "Cavo" Dinsmore and Lionel "Nene" bernard, the new York duo Unity 2, deliver the boldest and most American-sounding (lot's of yo's and peace's) album of hip-hp/ reggae dance hall genre (one I admit I'm quite found of). Full of zest and humor form the opening title track to the Rub-a-dub mix of 'Shirlee.' A real fun, bouncy and upbeat album indeed (*Reprise*)

**DELTONES** *Oddball Boys-* U.K. SKA CHICKS! The Deltones are an eight piece all-female ska outfit (plus one male drummer) that delivers bouncy rhythms that recall the heyday of the 2-tome bands, with Bangle-ish vocals, unbridled enthusiasm and a devil-may-care attitude. Originally released in the U.K. and Europe as Nana Choc Choc in Paris, this cassette adds a couple of bonus tracks not found on the original LP. 'Make Me Smile' shows what a great skankin' record this is! (*ROIR*)

**HARMONY** *Let There Be Harmony-* An appealing dexterous album that mixes R&B, afrocentric rap and spoken word poetry. Harmony shows that she can both sing and rap, and sometimes she does both in the same song showing how flexible she can be, as she does on 'Poundcake.' KRS-One of Boogie Down productions gives a hand with the production here. (*Virgin*)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS** *2 Nasty 4 Radio-* The concept behind this compilation of rappers on the Warners Brothers label is how "nasty" these artists can get. However, while this appears to be an anti-censorship comp, most of the artists here seem to be riding the issue, saying "fuck" and "bitch" a lot, instead of offering some real insights on the issue. The best things here are Roxanne's Shante's deliciously catty 'Brothers Ain't Shit' (the only song that hasn't been previously released) and Ice-T's anti-censorship rage 'Freedom of Speech,' complete with Jello Biafra samples. (*Cold Chillin'/ Warner Bros.*)



**MAT:** Me and Alex were in a hotel in London and we opened the window and started throwing tea bags into the street.

**ALEX:** The telly was teetering on the window sill and we thought, "should we give it a little nudge?" Then we thought, "No, tea bags are far more rebellious."

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